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MEDIÆVAL RECORDS

AND

SONNETS

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

BY

AUBREY DE VERE

LONDON
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1893

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

TO THE MEMORY OF

Kenelm Henry Digby

WHOSE "BROADSTONE OF HONOUR"

AND "MORES CATHOLICI"

NOBLY ASSERTED AND PROVED

THE TRUE GREATNESS OF THE MIDDLE AGES,

WHEN RECOGNISED BY FEW,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED BY

AUBREY DE VERE

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PREFACE

A FEW years ago I published a volume of poetry entitled *Legends and Records of the Church and the Empire.* It tracked its theme only through the transition time ending with Charlemagne, whose reign is commonly regarded as the beginning of that mediæval civilisation which succeeded to the early but false "Pax Romana" and the terrible later struggles of the Romano-Barbaric period. It had been my wish to add to that earlier series a Second Part illustrating the Middle Ages. To do justice to such a subject would have required a work to the composition of which the troubles and anxieties of the political crisis through which we have been passing were unfavourable. The fragments now published, if they leave unnoted many heroic acts and incidents characteristic of the Middle Ages, touch on others which illustrate at least their general spirit. Some may deem those illustrations partial; but in communities as in the individual it is fortunately often the best which is the most truly

characteristic, and most rewards our respectful regard. There were doubtless as bad men in the Middle Ages as before or after that time; and indeed the bad may be supposed to have been the worst at the best times, as their hearts must have been hardened by a long resistance to the good influences that surrounded them. On the other hand, the saints of ages in some respects the worst may often have been the greatest saints. They were bound over to a fierce antagonism against all vices, and strengthened against all compromise with them by an impassioned love for the opposite virtues; and their prayers were vehement spiritual exercises tasking and raising to its utmost their spiritual being. The Middle Ages are far from representing the height to which human society may reach when it has passed through its present second transition period; but to that height it can only reach if it does full justice to the age immediately preceding it, as it has long done to an earlier age, the Classical. The greatest of man's losses is that which he incurs from his deplorable power of growing callous to that which for centuries the humblest could appreciate. The descendants of those who built our cathedrals could see nothing in Gothic architecture; and there was a time when Dante and Shakespeare scarcely survived except as names. We still make our boast of Columbus and Copernicus; but we sometimes forget that these were

mediæval men, and men especially imbued with the mediæval spirit. They were the two great gates between the world of the Middle Ages and our own world of more extended knowledge and individual freedom.

The Middle Ages still survive among us more than we know in their instincts of honour and affection; what was most special to them is therefore more perceived by us when we compare them with earlier times which held in them but a faint promise of better things. They were eminently Christian ages; and this characteristic may perhaps not unfitly be indicated in poetry, since its mood is the indicative mood rather than the imperative, and since it prefers to suggest rather than to dispute. Christian *ideas*, as distinguished from Christian law and the details of doctrine, were far more alien from Pagan ideas in the days of old Christendom than they are among the modern nations. Many of them would have had no meaning for the Pagan intelligence, and would have been repulsive to Pagan sympathies. Life to the earnest mediæval Christian was both a light-hearted and a very serious thing. It found a type in the vigil. The Believer watched and waited for a future both far off and near him—a future which moulded his present. That future rendered Hope to him a great necessity and a great duty, as well as a constant support. It was the Pagan philosopher's boast that he made the best of the

present, and ignored the uncertain future. To him that future was a nightmare. But to ignore the future is to renounce hope, and without hope life can be, at best, but a good-humoured despair. The Pagan too commonly regarded life as a superficial thing because he was superficial himself; and Greek art was, except when at its highest, often at once epicurean and hard-hearted. To live was to the Pagan to glide swiftly over an ice-plain which might at any moment break if a weight were stayed upon it long. The tomb was an opprobrium to be disguised with gay sculptures; and the dead body a scandal to be burnt. To the mediæval mind life was a deep thing. To it the Divine was ever glancing forth from things which to the "mind of the sense" seemed but trifles. To deal kindly with a leper was to clothe and feed a God. To scandalise one of Christ's "little ones" might be to forfeit a deathless inheritance.

Yet to the mediæval man life was a light-hearted thing also. It was so because as regards spiritual matters his heart was at rest; because carefulness in them left a narrower place for worldly care; because no seriousness was squandered on trifles; because mortification averted satiety. A true poet [1] tells us of "the men of old" that

> "They went about their gravest deeds
> Like noble boys at play."

[1] The late Lord Houghton.

To that characteristic of the Middle Ages we owe largely those exquisite delineations of youth, so full of loveliness and of gladsomeness, which charm us in the pictures of the early masters. At that time youthfulness often survived in old age, which was not then regarded as life's inevitable frustration and joy's confutation, but rather as the rest of a quiet hope (like the Church's feast named "Expectatio"), beside the gates of perpetual youth.

In the pictures of saints there is also doubtless often a profound sadness; but it is a noble sadness, not a merely negative one, that of cowardice or exhaustion, such as in old times caused the term "miserable," like our word "wretch," to be a term of reproach. Earth was then regarded as an exile, not a "Patria." To the Christian the great things were the "Invisible things:" but from this it followed that the Christian "moved about in worlds not realised" by the senses, that they might be the better realised by the soul. Such worlds must have been phantom worlds but for those three angels of man's life, Faith, Hope, and Charity, which moved among them and irradiated them. Paganism and Christianity had each of them its Beatitudes; but they were different Beatitudes: the Pagan's aspired only to a "mens sana in corpore sano"; the Christian's were those of the Spirit—sorrow here, but a Comforter, and hereafter the Vision of God.

But it was not on heaven alone that the mediæval mind was set. "The Meek shall inherit the earth" because the most heavenly-minded can best appreciate it.

"We live by admiration, hope, and love,"[1] and in those qualities the nobler of the mediæval men were especially rich. It was their happy gift to look on all things with a child-like gaze of wonder, not with the spectacled eyes of the "minute philosopher." To this much in their character contributed. It was imaginative, not critical. It "delightedly believed" much that many modern men unreasonably disbelieve, to shew their cleverness. It cared more to admire than to be admired. With much of a childish instability, and something of that strange and heedless cruelty sometimes to be found in children, it united a child-like simplicity. It loved to wonder, and was not ashamed of proving mistaken. Stormy passions swept over it, and great crimes alternated with heroic deeds; but it was comparatively free from a more insidious snare than the passions—that of self-love. It possessed eminently also another merit the charm of which the Greek poets heartily appreciated, that of Unconsciousness; and thus escaped many weaknesses which belong to more conventional ages. Unselfishness was a marked characteristic of that time, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. It was then more common

[1] Wordsworth.

to be devoted to a fellow-creature or a noble cause. Hence the degree in which loyalty flourished, living like a soul in the other virtues, the comparatively small temptation to self-assertion or self-applause, and the great reverence then felt for those humble virtues—obedience and fidelity. Then, as now, pride was to be found, but it was more often the pride of ancestral worth than that of wealth or of intellect, or that surly and ignoble pride which sees in the "hierarchy of society" only a war against independence, as if a measureless dead level were more beautiful or more healthy than a country diversified by hill and plain. The Middle Ages were cheerful ages; and if their great Italian representative, Dante, was the most spiritual of poets, Chaucer, their great English representative, was the most mirthful and human-hearted.

ADVERTISEMENT

NEARLY all the following poems were recently composed, but a few, early published in anticipation of the present volume, are included in it because they belong essentially to its theme, and for the convenience of readers who might not otherwise possess them. One of these, "The Infant Bridal," illustrates a primary characteristic of the Middle Ages without which any delineation of them must remain very imperfect. In those ages all human ties and institutes were regarded as but faint shadows of things the archetypes and realities of which are reserved for us in a higher world. Man's earthly life was a Betrothal only; the true Bridal was to come later.

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LEGENDS OF THE CID

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

INTRODUCTORY

THE Cid was born A.D. 1026 and died A.D. 1099. His original name was Rodrigo di Bivar. In him Spain gave birth to the most entirely characteristic representative of mediæval chivalry. He embodied its happiest as well as its most heroic spirit. His military ardour was free alike from barbaric ruthlessness, and from the ambition of a Cæsar or an Alexander. He had not a touch either of that exaggerated love of praise which, at a later time, vulgarised the instinct of Honour, or of that selfishness and sentimentality which has infected modern times. For him all self-consciousness seems to have been lost in a light-hearted yet impassioned loyalty to just, generous, patriotic, and religious ends. Such were the "Men of Old"—

> "They went about their gravest deeds
> As noble boys at play."

I

THE CID'S MARRIAGE

WITHIN Valencia's streets were dole and woe;
Among the thoughtful, silence long and then
Sharp question and brief answer; sobs and tears
Where women gathered; something strange concealed

From children; rapid step of priest gray-grown
As though his mission were to beds of death.
The cause? Nine days before, the sea had swarmed
With ships continuous like the locust cloud
Full sail from far Morocco; six days later
Strange tents had crowded all the coasts as thick
As spots on corpse plague-stricken. The Cid lay dead,
Valencia's bulwark, but her sire much more.
Who else had made her Spain's;—Spain's Mother-City
Frowning defiance on the Prophet's coasts
Minarets enskied, gold domes, huge palaces
With ivory fretwork washed by azure waves,
Even to the fabulous East?
Day passed: night came:
Within Valencia's chiefest church the monks
Knelt round their Great One. He had sat since death
Throned near the Eastern altar. At the West
The many-columned aisles nigh lost in gloom
Changed to a fortress pile with massive walls
Lost in the mother rock, since Faith and War
That time were brethren vowed. Beneath its vault
Good knights kept watch, that stronghold's guard at need:
Glimmerings from distant altar lights, though faint,
Made way to them, oft crossed by shadowy forms
Gliding in silence o'er the pavements dim

With bosom-beating hand: the music strain
Reached them at times; less oft the voice of prayer.

Compline long past, the eldest of those knights,
By name Don Raymond, Lord of Barcelona,
Not rising, thus addressed low-toned his mates:
With great desire the nations will desire
To know our Cid in ages yet to come,
And yet will know him not. He was not one
Who builds a history up, complete and whole,
A century's blazon crying, "That was I!"
The day's work ever was the work he worked,
And laughingly he wrought it. Spake another:
Ay, 'twas no single act that made his greatness:
Yet greatness flashed from all his acts—the least;
A peasant cried one day, "God sent that man;"
A realm made answer, "God."
Don Sambro next:
I witnessed—'twas in youth—his earliest deed;
Gladsome it was, and gladdening when remembered,
Yet nowise alien 'mid these vaults of death:
His sire, Don Diego, was an aged man;
Between him and Count Gomez, Gormaz' lord,
Debate arose. Gomez had flourished long
A warrior prime: whene'er the Cortes met
He spake its earliest word. Among the hills

A thousand watched his hand, and wrought its hest.
That day, inflamed by wine, he struck Diego:
Diego, warrior once, then weak from age,
Was all unmeet for combat in the lists:
Daily he sat, grief-worn, beside his hearth
And shrank from friend like one who fears to infect
Sound man by hand diseased. He spake but once,
"Till that black hour dishonour none defiled
Layn Calvo's blood!" His son, our Cid, Rodrigo,
Then twelve years old, leaped up! "Mudarra's sword!
That and your blessing!" Strong through both he rode,
Nor stayed until his horse foam-flecked stood up
At Gormaz' gate. Gomez refused his challenge:
Rodrigo smote him: soon the lists were formed:
Not long the strife: sole standing o'er the dead
Thus 'mid that knightly concourse spake the boy,
"Had he but struck my cheek, and not my sire's,
Far liefer had I lopped mine own left hand
Than yon sage head!" Count Gomez' orphaned daughter,
Child of ten years, hearing that word, replied,
"He also had a Father."
August's sun
Westering had tinged the castle hall with red:
There sat Diego at the supper-board
But eating not. A horse's foot was heard:

In rushed, all glowing like that sun, the boy:
He knelt; then rising, laughed. Aloud he cried,
"Father, your fare hath scanty been of late
As spider's when long frosts have frozen the flies:
Haply this herb may sharpen appetite!"
His mantle fell: he lifted by the locks
The unjust aggressor's head. Diego rose:
First with raised eyes he tendered thanks to Heaven;
Then added: "Son, my sentence ever stood,
The hand that battles best is hand to rule:
Henceforth live thou sole master in this house;"
He pointed, and the seneschal kneeling laid
The castle's keys before the young man's feet.
Then clamour rose, "O'er yon portcullis fix
That traitor's head, that all may gaze upon it
And hate it as a true man knows to hate!"
Not thus Rodrigo willed. He sent that head
To Gormaz with a stately retinue—
Ten knights, and priests entoning "Miserere."
This solaced Gomez' child. Then rose that saying,
"He strikes from love, not hate."

Don Martin next—

Don Martin of Castile: Witness was I
Not less of wonders by Rodrigo wrought.
Eight years went by: his father died. The Moors
Swarmed forth o'er many a region of Castile,

Domingo, La Calzada, Vilforado,
Capturing whole herds, white flocks, and brood-mares many:
Rodrigo of Bivar to battle rushed;
Smote them where Oca's mountains closed them round;
Retook their spoil. Five Moorish kings, their best,
He haled in triumph home to Bivar's gate
And bade them kneel chain-bound before his mother.
That homage tendered, thus he spake: "Depart!"
That holy Lady still had taught her son
Reverence for sufferers, and the Poor of Christ,
And courtesy 'mid wildest storms of war.
On her he looked, later on them; continued:
"I scorn to hold you captive! from this hour
My vassals ye. I want nor slaves nor serfs."
The Five made answer "Yea," and called him "Cid,"
Their term for "Lord": he bore it from that hour.

Don Garcia next: A fairer sight by far
And fitter to beguile our sorrowful watch,
I saw—his marriage. Our great King Ferrando,
Who made one realm of Leon and Castile,
Beside that new-built bridge Zimara called
Was standing 'mid his nobles on a day
What time that name, "The Cid," rang first o'er Spain:
Then drew to him a maiden clothed in black,

A sister at each side. She spake: "Sir King,
I come your suitor, child of Gomez, once
Your counsellor and your friend, but come not less
The claimant of my right. Betwixt my sire
And Diego, father of that Cid world-famed
This hour for valour and for justice both,
Unhappy feud arose: my father smote him:
Aggrieved by that mischance the Cid, then young,
Challenged my sire and in the tourney slew him,
To me great grief albeit, on wars intent,
My father seldom saw me. Since that day
Tumult perpetual shakes our vassal realm:
Who wills breaks down the bridge; who wills diverts
The river from our mill-wheel to his own:
Daily the insurgent commons toss their heads,
Clamouring 'No tax.' I fear for these, my sisters,
Fear more the downfall of our House and Name,
And, motherless, have none with whom to counsel.
King! some strong hand and just should quell this wrong!
What hand but his who caused it? 'Twas his right
To smite his Father's smiter. 'Tis my right
To choose for champion him who wrought the woe.
Command him to espouse me! That implies
Privilege and Duty both to ward our House,
And these my sisters young." Level and clear
She fixed upon the King her eyes like one

Who knows her cause is just.
Ferrando mused,
Then answered, smiling, "Damsel, have your will!
You are happier than you know! Rodrigo's Wife!
Of him you wot as little as of marriage!
Yon Cid will prove the greatest man in Spain."
Then with a royal frankness added thus:
"Moreover, maid, your lands are broad: another
Conjoining them with his might plot and scheme:
Not so the Cid: that man was loyal born;
My kinsman. He shall wed you!"
Straight he wrote:
"Cid, at Palencia seek me at your earliest,
There to confer on things that touch the State,
Likewise God's glory, and your weal besides."

Incontinent to Palencia rode my Cid
With kinsfolk companied and many a knight;
The King received him in his palace chapel,
Vespers concluded but the aisles still thronged;
Embraced him; then stepped back, and, gazing on him,
Exclaimed, "Not knighted yet! My fault, my sin!
I must redeem the offence! Good kinsman, kneel!"
High up the bells renewed their silver clamour;
Ferrando knighted him: Ferrando's Queen
Led to the gate his charger: the Infanta

Girt him with spurs. Then gave the King command
Like bishop missioning priest but late ordained,
"That gift now thine communicate to others!"
Straight to the chapel's altar moved the Cid
And lifted thence the sword of state. Before him
Three youthful nobles knelt. He with that sword
Their knighthood laid upon them.
Masque and dance
Lasted three days: then spake to him the King,
"Cid—for that name by which all Spain reveres you,
Albeit a title not by me conferred,
I recognise well pleased—Donna Ximena,
Heiress of Gomez slain by you of old,
Warrior and counsellor dear to me and mine,
Stands sore imperilled through that righteous deed,
Her subjects in revolt and every knave
Flouting her princely right. Revolts spread fast;
Ere long my kingdom may lie meshed in such:
I see the hand that best can deal with treason!
My royal honour stands to her impledged
That you—first wedding her—her lands your own—
Should, in the embraces of your name and glory
Foster the tender weakness of her greatness.
Wilt thou redeem that pledge?"
The youth, "This maid,
King, is good and fair?"

Ferrando smiled;
" Glad am I that, as in my youthful days,
Goodness and grace still reign; kings rule not all!
Good she must needs be since her sire was good;
Majestical she is: her suit she made
As one who gives command; but you shall see her.
Seek we the Presence Chamber!"
From a throng
Of courtly ladies in the glory clad
Of silver cloudland when a moon sea-born
That silver turns to pearl, Ximena moved
Calmly, not quickly without summoning sign,
A sister at each hand in weeds night-black
And stood before the King. No gems she wore
And dark yet star-like shone her large, strong eyes,
A queenly presence. All Castile that day
Held naught beside so noble. Reverently
The young man glanced upon her; glanced again:
At last he gazed: then, smiling, thus he spake:
" Forfend it, Heaven, Sir King, that vassal knight
Should break his monarch's pledge!" Ferrando next,
" Maid, thou hast heard him: he demands thy hand."
To whom, unchanged, Ximena made reply:
" King! better far the whole truth than the half!
That youth should know it. I demanded his:
I deemed his hand my right. My rights have ceased;

Now wife, not maid, my rights are two alone,
Henceforth to love my Husband and obey."
She knelt, and, lifting, kissed her Husband's hand,
And next the King's; then rose and silent stood.
Ferrando spake: "The day's a youngling yet,
And I must see its golden promise crowned:
Your bridesmaids and your bridal robes await you:
Kings lack not foresight: all things are prepared."
Ximena sighed: "So soon! Then be it so!"
An hour and she returned in bridal white
With countenance unshaken as before,
Yet brightened by a glad expectancy.
The King gave sign: that company august
In long procession to the chapel passed;
Therein 'mid anthems sung, and incense cloud,
The nuptial Mass was solemnised. Ferrando,
Lowering his sceptre, gave the Bride away;
Her little sisters smiled and wept by turns;
The Cid adown her finger slipped the ring;
The Bishop blessed them, showering upon both
The Holy Water. From their knees they rose
Husband and Wife thenceforth. Leaving that church
Largess they showered on all.
At once they rode
To Bivar, where from age to age had dwelt
The Cid's great race. Behind them rode their knights,

Two hundred men. Before the castle's gate
High on its topmost step his mother stood
Girt by the stateliest ladies of that land
In festive garb arrayed. Her daughter new
Before her knelt; then, to her bosom clasped,
Looked up, and, smiling, spake not. Spake my Cid:
"Mother, if less than this had been my Bride
Here had I tarried many a month and year;
This is God's gift, the greatest He could give,
A maid taught nobleness in sorrow's school,
Unmatched for courage, simpleness, and truth:
Yea all her words have in them strength and sweetness.
Now therefore, since God's gifts must first be earned,
Not till five victories on five battle-fields
Against Christ's foes have made her justly mine
Inhabit I with her in castle or waste.
Cherish her thou as thou didst cherish me;
The laws of Honour and of Faith to her
Teach as thou taughtest to me. Farewell to both!"
He turned, he lingered not, he looked not back;
Westward he rode to combat with the Moors.
Then spake another of those watchers sad,
Count Gaspar of the Douro: Love is good;
But good things live beside. That knew the Cid;
That lesson learned I riding at his left
Beneath his standard named "Ximena's Veil."

Three days we rode o'er hill and dale; the fourth,
The daylight slowly dying o'er the moor,
A shrill voice reached us from the neighbouring fen,
A drowning man's. Down leaped our Cid to earth
And, ere another's foot had left the stirrup,
Forth from the water drew him; held him next
On his own horse before him. 'Twas a Leper!
The knights stared round them! When they supped
that eve,
He placed that Leper at his side. The knights
Forth strode. At night one bed received them both.
Sirs, learn the marvel! As Rodrigo slept
Betwixt his shoulders twain that Leper blew
Breath of strong virtue, piercing to his heart.
A cry was heard—the Cid's—the knights rushed in
Sworded: they searched the room: they searched the
house:
The Cid slept well: but Leper none was found:
Sudden that chamber brightened like the sun
New risen o'er waves, and in its splendour stood
A Man in snowy raiment speaking thus:
"Sleepest thou, Rodrigo?" Thus my Cid replied,
"My Lord, I slept; but sleep not; who art thou?"
He spake, and, rising, in that splendour knelt:
And answer came: "Thy Brother-man am I,
In heaven thy Patron, though the least in heaven,

Lazarus, thy brother, who unhonoured lay
At Dives' gate. To-day thou honoured'st me:
Therefore thy Jesus this to thee accords
That whensoe'er in time of peril or pain
Or dread temptations dealing with the soul
Again that strong Breath blows upon thy heart,
Nor angel's breath that Breath shall be, nor man's,
But Breath immortal arming thy resolve,
So long as Humbleness and Love are thine,
With strength as though the total Hosts of Heaven
Leaned on thy single sword. The work thou workest
That hour shall prosper. Moor and Christian, both,
Shall fear thee and thy death be glorified."
Slowly that splendour waned away: not less
Hour after hour the Cid prayed on. At morn
Forth from that village forest-girt we rode
Ere flashed a dew-drop on its lightest spray
Or woke its earliest bird.
Thenceforward knights
Flocked daily to the Cid. Each month, each week
The Impostor's hosts, with all their banners green
Moon-blazoned, fled before him like the wind.
Now champaign broad, now fortress eyeing hard
From beetling cliff the horizon's utmost bound
Witnessed well pleased the overthrow of each:
Merida fell, Evora, Badajoz,

Bega in turn; more late Estramadura.
Fiercest of those great conflicts was the fifth:
From that red battle-field my Cid despatched
Unbounded spoil that raised a mighty tower
O'er Burgos' church wherein he was baptized.
Moreover, after every conquering march
Huge doles he sent to Christian and to Moor;
For thus he said: "Though war be sport to knights
The tears of poor men and their breadless babes
Bedew the trampled soil." His vow fulfilled,
Five victories won, five months gone by, with joy
Once more to Bivar's towers the Cid returned.
There, at its gate, they stood who loved him best:
On the third step—as when he saw them last—
His Mother and Ximena.

Musing sat,
The legend of that Bridal at an end,
Long time those watchers. Lastly rose a knight,
The youngest of that company elect,
Silent till then, as slender as a maid;
With countenance innocent as childhood's self
Yet venerable as a priest's gray-haired:
He spake: "A bridal then, and now a death,
A short glad space between them! Such is life!
That means our earthly life is but betrothal;
The marriage is where marriage vows are none.

Lo there! once more the altar lights flash forth:
That Widow-Wife, five months a Maiden-Wife,
Kneels 'mid their splendour." Eastward moved the knights,
And, kneeling near the altar, with the monks
Entoned the Miserere.

II

The Cid in Exile

Next night once more in that Cathedral keep
Walled by its mother-rock the warriors watched:
After long silence, leaving not his seat,
At length there spake a noble knight and brave,
Don Aquilar of Gabra: low his voice;
His eyes oft resting on the altar lights,
At times on listener near:
"Sirs, all applaud the Conqueror: braver far
Our Cid that hour when he refused the battle:
I heard that tale in childhood." "Let us hear it,"
The others cried; and thus that knight began:
Our king, Ferrando, nighing to his death,
Beckoned the Cid and spake: "We two were friends;
Attend my dying charge. My race is Goth,
And in the brain, and blood, and spirit of Goth
Tempest but sleeps to waken. I have portioned

My kingdom in three parts among my sons,
Don Sanchez, Don García, Don Alphonso,
And throned my daughter in Zamora's towers :
When bickerings rise, sustain my testament."
He died ; his son, King Sanchez, was a churl :
One day he rode abroad : at set of sun
Zamora faced him : many-towered it stood
Crowning a rock and flinging far its shade
O'er Douro's crimsoned wave. He muttered low :
"Yon city mine, all Spain were mine." That night
Thus spake he, careless seeming, to the Cid :
"Ill judged my father dowering with yon fort
A woman-hand. At morn search out that woman ;
Accost her thus from me : 'My kingdom's flank
Lies bare : it needs for shield thy city's fortress.
I yield to thee Medina in its place
Tredra not less.'" Ill pleased, the Cid replied,
Though reverent not concealing his displeasure :
"Send other herald on that errand, king !
Ofttimes, a boy I dwelt in yonder fort
When lodged therein Ferrando and Urraca,
And will not wrong your father's testament."
King Sanchez frowned. Unmoved, the Cid resumed :
"I take thy missive, king, and bring her answer,
But proffer service none." At morn he placed
That missive in Urraca's hand ; she rose ;

And raised her hands to heaven and answered fierce:
"His brother, Don García, he hath bound;
His brother, Don Alphonso, driven to exile;
Elvira, next, my sister and his own,
He mulct of half her lands; he now mulcts me!
Swallow me, earth, if I obey his hest!
Cid! thee I blame not, for I know thy heart!
Forth with my answer to my traitor brother!
Zamora's sons and I will die ere yet
I yield her meanest stone to force or fraud."
Then spake the Cid: "The answer of a queen,
And meet for King Ferrando's child! Urraca,
This sword shall ne'er be raised against thy right!
My knighthood was in part through thee conferred."
The Cid returned: King Sanchez stormed and raged:
"This work is thine!" Unmoved, my Cid replied,
"True vassal have I proved to thee, O king,
But sword against the daughter of thy sire
I will not lift." King Sanchez: "For his sake
I spare thy life! Henceforth thou livest an exile!"
Low bowed the Cid. Bivar he reached that night,
And summoning all his knights, twelve hundred men,
Rode thence and reached Toledo.

Sirs, ere long
God dealt with that bad man. Three days his host
Fought malcontent: grimly they scaled the walls;

Zamora's sons hurled on them stones and rocks
The battlements themselves, till ditch and moat
Thickened with corpses, and the Douro left
Daily a higher blood-line on those walls
While whispered man to man; "Our toil is lost,
He spurned our best; what cares he for men's lives?"
Then from Zamora sped a knight forsworn
By name Vellido Dolfos, crafty man,
Fearless in stratagem, in war a coward.
Like one pursued he galloped to the camp,
Checked rein at Sanchez' tent, and, breathless, cried:
"King, I had slain thee gladly yesternight;
This day a wronged man sues thee. Sir, revenge
'Gainst thy false sister is the meed I claim,
Thy sister kind to caitiffs, false to friends!
I know a secret postern to yon fort;
It shall be thine this night." "Who sees believes,"
Sanchez replied; "That postern—let me see it!"
They rode to where the forest's branching skirt
Screened it from random eyes. The king dismounted,
And, companied by that traitor knight alone,
Peered through that postern's bars. With lightning speed
The traitor launched his javelin 'gainst the king;
It nailed him to that ivy-mantled wall:
Vellido through the woodland labyrinths scaped.

The king ere sunset died.
Don Sanchez dead,
At once, from exile King Alphonso burst:
The Cortes met: with haughty brow he claimed
Allegiance due, like one who knows his rights,
Full sovereignty, God-given, and not from man,
Of Leon and Castile. They gave consent;
At Burgos in procession long and slow
The knights and nobles passed, and passing kissed
Each the king's hand. Alone the Cid stood still.
Astonished sat the king. He spake: "The Cid
Alone no homage pays." The Cid replied:
"Sir, through your total realm a rumour flies,
And kings, all know, must live above suspicion—
That in your brother's death a part was yours:
Sir, in his day your brother did me wrong:
I, for that wrong am none the less his vassal:
Make oath, sir king, that rumour is a lie!
Till then from me no homage!" Silent long
Alphonso sat: then "Be it so," he said.
Next day he rode to Burgos' chiefest church,
And there heard Mass. About him stood that hour
His nobles and hidalgos: Mass surceased,
Crowned, on a dais high, in sight of all
Alphonso sat: behind him stood twelve knights:
Slowly my Cid advanced, upon his breast

Clasping the Gospels open thrown. The king
Laid on them hands outspread. Then spake my Cid:
"I swear that in my brother's death no part
Was mine." Low-bowed, Alphonso said, "I swear;"
Likewise his twelve hidalgos. Then the Cid:
"If false my oath, mine be my brother's fate."
Alphonso said "Amen"; but at that word
His colour changed. With eye firm-fixed my Cid
Slowly that oath repeated; and once more
The king and his hidalgos said "Amen!"
Three times he spake it; thrice the monarch swore:
Then waved the standards, and the bells rang out;
And sea-like swayed the masses t'ward the gates.
Parting, Alphonso whispered to my Cid—
None heard the words he spake.

It chanced one day
The king, from Burgos riding with his knights,
Met face to face whom most he loathed on earth.
With lifted hand he spake: "Depart my land!"
The Cid his charger spurred; o'er-leaped the wall;
Then tossing back his head, loud laughing cried,
"Sir king, 'tis done! This land is land of mine!"
Raging the king exclaimed: "Depart my realm
Ere the ninth day!" My Cid: "Hidalgo's right
By old prescription yields him thirty days
If banished from the realm." Alphonso then:

"Ere the ninth eve, or else I take thy head!"
Low bowed Rodrigues to his saddle bow
And rode to Bivar. Summoning there his knights
Briefly he spake: "You see a banished man."
They answered naught. Then Alvar Fanez rose
And said: "With thee we live; for thee we die,"
And rising, all that concourse said: "Amen."

The eighth day dawned: My Cid from Bivar rode:
Whilst yet his charger pawed before its gate
He turned, and backward gazed. Beholding then
His hall deserted, open all its doors,
No cloaks hung up, within the porch no seat,
No hawk on perch, no mastiff on the mat,
No standard from the tower forth streaming free
Large tears were in his eyes; but no tear fell;
And distant seemed his voice—distant though clear
Like voice from evening field, as thus he spake:
"Mine enemies did this: praise God for all things!
Mary, pray well that I, the banished man,
May drive the Pagans from His holy Spain,
One day requite true friends." To Alvar next
He spake: "The poor have in this wrong no part;
See that they suffer none;" then spurred his horse.
Beside the gate there sat an aged crone
Who cried, "In fortunate hour ride forth, O Cid!
God give thee speed and spoil!"

They reached old Burgos
At noontide, while for heat the dogs red-tongued
Slept in the streets. The king had given command
"Let no man lodge the Cid, or give him bread!"
As slowly on his sixty warriors rode
And gazed on bakers' shops, yet touched no loaf
The gentle townsmen wept, "A sorry sight!"
Women were bolder: "Vassal good," they cried,
"To churlish Suzerain!" The Posado's gate
He smote three times with spear-shaft: none replied.
At last beneath its bars there crept a child
Dark-eyed, red-lipped, a girl of nine years old,
Clasping a crust. Sweet-toned she made accost:
"Great Cid, we dare not open window or door
The king would blind us else. Stretch down thy hand
That I may kiss it!" At her word my Cid
Stretched down his hand. She kissed it, hiding next
Therein the crust, and closing one by one
O'er it the mail-clad fingers. Laughed my Cid:
"God's saints protect that shining head from hurt
And those small feet from ways unblest, and send
In fitting time fit mate." The sixty laughed:
Once more the child crept in beneath the bars:
They noted long the silver feet upturned
With crimson touches streaked. That night my Cid
Couched on a sand plain with his company

The palm-boughs rustling 'gainst their stems thick-scaled.
Half-sleeping thus he mused. "Could I, unworthy,
So all unlike that child in faith and love,
Have portioned out that crust among my knights
God might have changed it to a Sacrament
And caused us in the strength thereof to walk
Full forty days."
An hour before the cocks
In neighbouring farms their earliest clarions rang
The Cid had mounted; reached ere nones that haunt
Wherein his wife had taken sanctuary,
San Pedro de Cardena. At the gate
He blew his battle-horn. They knew it well!
Rushed forth Ximena and her ladies first:
O what a weeping was there at his feet!
Then followed many a monk with large slow eyes:
The abbot long had wished to see the Cid;
And now rejoiced: the feast was great that day
And great the poor man's share; and chimed the bells
So loudly that the king, in Burgos throned,
Frowned but spake nought. Next day two hundred knights
Flocked to the Cid's white standard. On the third,
Ere shone its sunrise, by that Abbey's gate
My Cid for blessing knelt, then spake: "Lord Abbot,
Be careful of my wife, Donna Ximena,

For princelier lady stands not on this earth
Of stouter courage or of sweeter life.
Likewise breed up my babes in sanctity;
Thy convent shall not lack, and if I die
God is my banker and will pay my debts."
Next, to her lord Ximena with slow steps
Made way, and knelt; and weeping thus she spake:
"Sundered ere death! I knew not that could be!"
Their parting seemed like parting soul and body.
Last came two ladies with his daughters twain.
He took them in his arms: his tears fell on them
Because they wept not but bewildered smiled;
And thus he spake: "Please God, with Mary's prayers,
I yet shall give these little maidens mine
With mine own hand to husbands worthy of them."
He said; and shook his rein, nor once looked back;
And the rising sun shone bright on many a face
Tear-wet in that dim porch.
Then spake a knight
Revered by all, Don Incar of Simancas
With strenuous face, keen eyes, and hectic hand:
A stripling I, when first that war began;
Rapturous it was as hunting of the stag
When blares the horn from echoing cliff and wood,
And deer-like bound the coursers. Sport began
Nigh to Castregon; next, like wind it rushed

To Fita, Guadalgara, and Alcala,
Thence to Heneres, and Torancio's plain,
And the olive-shaded gorge of Bobierca.
We crossed its dark-bright stream. A Moorish maid
Sold us red apples, and from wells snow-cold
Drew water for our mules. Our later deeds
Fade from my mind. We captured castles twelve
And raised the Cross upon them. Once dim mist
Lifted at morn shewed Moors uncounted nigh;
We stood in doubt. Our standard-bearer cried;
"Sustain your standard, sirs; or if it please you,
Consign it to the Moors!" He galloped on;
The dusky hordes closed round him. Torrent-like
We dashed upon them! Soon the morning shone
Through that black mass. The standard saved the host,
And not the host the standard. Likewise this
Clings to my memory trivial as it seems:
At Imbra, when the Moors bewailed their kine
Snatched from its golden mead, my Cid replied:
"God save you, sirs! My king and I are foes.
In exile gentlemen must live on spoil.
What! would you set us spinning flax or wool?
Not kine alone, but all your vales and plains
Are ours by ancient right! To Afric back!
This land is Spain—our Spain!"

That warfare past,

My Cid addressed him thus to Alvar Fanez:
"Cousin, betake thee to that saintly place,
San Pedro where abide my wife and babes:
Raise first those Moorish banners in its aisles,
Then noise abroad thy tidings. Greet with spoil
That abbot old. Seek last the king, Alphonso:
Give him his fifth: make no demand in turn;
Much less request. I wait not on his humours."
Alvar went forth: In fair Valladolid
Ere long he met Alphonso with his train
Half way betwixt the palace and cathedral
Recent from Mass. The monarch—without greeting—
"What means yon train of horses trapped in gold,
And swords inwrought with gems?" Alvar replied
"Sir king, my Cid bestows them on your Highness,
The fifth part of his spoil: for battles still
He wins, and wide domains, and tower, and town.
King, if the Cid but kept the lands he conquers
Half Spain would be his realm. Content he is
To hold them from your Grace in vassalage.
Therefore restore him to your royal favour!"
Alphonso then: "'Tis early in the morn
To take a banished man to grace and favour!
'Twere shame to stint my wrath so soon. For spoil,
Kings need not spoil! Not less, since thus the Moors
Are stripped, his work is work of God in part:

Let him send still my fifth!"
Then laughing spake
A humorous knight, Don Leon of Toledo:
Ay, ay, our King can jest when jest means gold!
Our Cid could jest with lions in his path!
A hundred tales attest it: this is one:
Here dwelt he long in royal state. One day
It chanced, the banquet o'er, asleep he fell
Still seated on the dais for the noon
Was hot, while talked or laughed the noble guests
Ranged as their custom was around his board;
His palace held some guests beside hidalgos
That day, and one from Afric, not a Moor;
A lion's cage stood in the outer court;
Its door was left ajar. Scenting the meat
That lion reached at last the banquet chamber:
The ladies screamed: the warriors drew their swords:
The Infantes twain of Carrion most were mazed;
The elder backed into a wine-vat brimmed
Purpling the marble floors; the youngest crept
Beneath the board to where the Cid was throned
And quivering clasped his feet. The Cid awoke;
Rubbed first his eyes; gazed round him; marked that lion;
Advanced, though still half sleeping; by the mane
Drew him obedient as a mastiff hound;
Relodged him; barred his prison; re-enthroned

His own brave bulk. The knights pushed back their swords:
The Infantes strove to laugh; the ladies smiled;
A priest gave thanks in Latin, first for meat,
Next that that beast had failed on them to banquet;
Ere ceased that prayer my Cid again slept well;
Sole time, men say, he ever slept at prayer,
Albeit at sermons oft.
Sir Incar next;
Your boasters see not far! Fortune ere long
On King Alphonso cast a glance oblique,
For vassals weak and meek grew strong and haughty;
And when huge tracts were flooded now, now parched,
Men cried "our king is bad." That king sent gifts
Suing Cid's return. The Cid replied:
"To others gifts! for me my lands suffice.
My king commands my sword; my terms are these:
'To each hidalgo thirty days, not nine,
Shall stand conceded ere his banishment,
And courts beside wherein to plead his cause.
Next, charters old shall have their reverence old
As though their seals were red with martyrs' blood.
Lastly the king shall nowhere levy tax
Warring on law. Such tax is royal treason:
Thus wronged, the land is free to rise in arms.'"
Long time the king demurred: then frowned consent;

And there was peace thenceforth. That day arose
This saying: "Happy exile he that home
Returning to his country, brings her gifts.
His rest shall be in Heaven."
No tale beside
Succeeded. Sweetly and slowly once again
From that remote high altar rose a hymn
Tender and sad: that female train once more
Approached it two by two, with steps as soft
As though they trod on hearts—Ximena last;
And star by star the altar lights shone out.
The knights arose, and, moving t'ward the east
Knelt close behind those kneelers.

III

The Cid at Valencia

Once more the warriors watched: the first to speak
A knight of splenetic lips though roughly kind,
Don José de Maria, thus began:
Sirs, some have boasted deeds if quaint yet brave,
And some have lectured long of lesser triumphs
The Cid's half jesting feats. Such chroniclers
Because they shared those battles give them praise,

Praising therein themselves. Valencia! there
Flamed forth the man's true greatness like the sun!—
The Moors' chief city, where their noblest dwelt
In garden-girdled palaces 'mid palms.
Seaward it looks t'ward every coast where waves
Their prophet's flag accurst. Thus spake the Cid:
"Valencia's king sent kinglings on a day
When I, new wedded, hunted on his grounds,
To visit me. We grappled; and they fled:
Decorum needs that we return that visit."
Pass we the lesser triumphs on his march.
He took Valencia's suburb chief. Huge walls
Manned by an army barred our farther progress;
Our scaling ladders near them seemed like toys.
The Cid encamped before them; missives sent:
"Sirs, have your choice! or fight or die of hunger!"
But they had seen him in the field too oft
To fight as once they fought. The Cid flung back
With scorn their petulant sallies. Day by day
Their stores were minished. Sorer week by week
The anguish of their hunger. Many a Moor
Rushed to our serried ranks loud clamouring, "Bread!"
"Make us your slaves, but feed our babes!"
At last
An unexpected promise dawned upon them;
The mightiest of the Moorish hosts drew near,

The Almoravides; and Valencia's sons,
Fools of a credulous hope, exultant cried:
"To Allah praise! Yon Christian foe is doomed;
Ere long their bones shall whiten vale and plain!"
So sang they, clustered on the city walls
As twilight deeper grew, and plainlier shone
The Moorish camp-fires far. Meantime my Cid
Had given command to rive the dams and bridges
And open fling the sluices to the sea,
For prescient was the man and knew his foe
Must cross a lowland wide. The sea rushed in;
Twilight to blackness changed. The moon was drowned
In plunging storm of hail and rain and snow:
Emerging thence it stared on wandering floods
From sea and river, and the mountain walls
Whose torrents, glimpsed but when the lightning flared,
Thundered far off. Vain were the Moslem vows,
For countless prayers of Christians in all lands
From Breton coasts to the utmost German forest
And all that empire old of Charlemagne
Meeting them, drave them past the heavenly gates
Abortive shapes and frustrate. All night long
The Moors down crouched upon their city walls
Clinging to tower and coign. At dawn came news!
That Moorish force had fled; Valencia's sons
When spread those tidings deemed themselves dead men;

Yea, as the blind they groped about their streets,
Or staggered on like drunkards; neither knew
Each man the face of neighbour or of friend,
But gazed at him and passed: at other times
Old enemies clasped hands but spake no word;
And some flung forth their arms like swimmer spent
That sinks in black seas lost. Ten days went by;
The famine spread till chiefs remote drew near
Crying: "Thy vassals we!"
Four weeks had passed;
Then rose a white-haired elder, prophet deemed,
And famed for justice long, a silent man;
For three whole years he had not spoken word
Save thrice. He scaled Valencia's topmost tower,
And while around its base the people thronged
Made thus the lamentation of the city:
Nine times he made it ere the sun went down.

"Valencia, my Valencia! Trouble and grief
Have come upon thee, and the hour decreed:
If ever God on any place shewed mercy
Now let Him shew it. For thy name was joy:
All Moors that live their boasting made of thee.

If God this day should utterly consume thee
Thy doom is doom of pride. If those four stones

The corner-stones that bind thy walls in one
Could leave their dread foundations, and draw nigh
And speak with stony mouth to stony ear,
The burden of their dirge would be thy sin.

Thy towers far-gazing see but woe. Thy river,
Old Guadalever, from its course is bent,
And all those watery ministers of thine
Far-sluiced behold their channels choked with mud;
Dried are the gardens green that sucked their freshness:
The wolf and wild boar root thy plantains down;
Thy fields are baked like clay.
Thy harbour vast,
The mirror of thy greatness, and the marvel
Of merchant princes, guests from every land,
Rots thick with corpses; and above it far
Drifts the red smoke from burning tower and town
Along thy coasts.
Valencia, my Valencia!
This is the death-cry from a breaking heart.
Repent thee of thy sins!"
When sank the sun
That burthen ceased. Then round that pillar's base
Rang forth a mighty and a piercing cry;
And headlong from it through the city rushed
Women and men. Then first that saying rose,

"Upon my right hand breaks the sea to drown me,
The lion on my left to crush my bones:
Behind me is the fire: before my face
And all around, the hunger."
From that hour
Whoso had bread or grain in earth interred it
Like wild beast that inters its remnant spoil,
And gnawed it stealthily—an ounce a day—
With keen eyes glancing round. At last a beggar
Groped his blind way into the market place
And cried, "Give up the city!" Straight that cry
Ran through Valencia; and its elders rose
And paced barefoot, and found the Cid, and knelt,
And laid the city's keys before his feet:
Right courteously and sadly he received them;
Helmless he rode through silent streets, his horse
With muffled feet in reverence for their woe;
The Cross first raised he on the Alcazar's tower,
Then freed the Christian slaves. Proclaim he made
"Let all who will depart the city, free:"
Two days sufficed not for those throngs forth-streaming:
Thousands remained, so well they loved that place;
O'er these he set, alcalde of their race,
That elder—Alfaraxi was his name—
Who mounting to Valencia's topmost tower
Had sung that city's dirge.

Through that just man
The Moors their tribute paid. Thenceforth his fame
Drew thousands to the Cid. From that far East
Whence came the Magi following still the star
To Bethlehem's crib, drew near a wondrous man
Close shorn and shaven, Don Hieronymo,
On foot a monk, a warrior when on horse;
Hating the Moors, he came to waste and slay them.
My Cid received that priest full honourably,
And gave him armour and a horse. Withal
Bishop he made him of Valencia's city,
With instant charge that every mosque should change
Thenceforth to Christian church.

The Cid next day
Sent to San Pedro's Convent golden store
And mystic gems; for well he loved that haunt
Within whose balmy bosom dwelt once more
His wife and infants twain—not infants now
But virgins in the lap of womanhood.
He sent command to speed them to Valencia:
That missive read, they knelt and raised their hands
Much weeping for great joy. The abbot old
Wept also not for gladness but for grief
Since much he loved them. Brief was his reply:
"I send them, Cid: our convent year by year
Will pray for thine and thee."

A week went by;
And now Ximena with her daughters twain
Nighed to Valencia, and my Cid rode forth
To meet her, helmed and mailed. Hieronymo,
Who, clad in mystic raiment white and black,
Followed Perfection, sent his clergy forth:
That great procession met them, golden-robed,
Three crosses at their head. Behind them trooped
The knights, a glittering company. The Cid
Rode at its head. Their mother and those maids
Leaped down and rushed to him with arms extended.
Silent he clasped them each. At last he spake,
Laughing like one who jests that he may weep not:
"Enter Valencia! 'Tis your heritage!
I hold it but in fief." Entrance they made
Through streets with countless windows tapestry-hung
And arches vine-entwined. Wondering, they marked
Its gilded minarets, and high palace fronts
Mosaic-wrought. At last they reached that tower,
The same which heard so late the prophet's dirge.
They clomb its marble steps. To the West they saw
The city's myriad gardens fountain-lit;
Eastward the sea. They knelt and sang "Te Deum";
And from the vast and marvelling mass beneath
The great "Amen" ascended.

Sirs, a tale

For children made might here find happy end;
But life, a teacher rough, when all looks well
Genders its tempest worst. Winter went by
With feast and tourney rich. Spring-tide returned:
A sudden flame of flowers o'er-ran the earth;
To see that sight, they clomb again that tower:
What met their eyes? A spectacle unlooked for!
The horizon line was white with countless sails.
The Cid but smiled: "I told you not of this,
A sorry seasoning for your winter banquets,
But knew it well. In far Morocco sits
The Emperor of the Afric Moors. Yon fleet
Wafts here his son, with thirty kings all vowed
Their steeds to water in our Holy Wells
Then stable them in every Christian church:
What sayst thou, lady mine?" Ximena spake:
"How many come they?" And the Cid replied
"Full fifty thousand; and five thousand ours!"
Death-pale his daughters grew and silent stood:
Ximena made reply, her large black eyes
Dilating at each word, "What God inflicts
Man can endure." That moment strange eclipse
Darkened the sun; and from that fleet storm-hid
The Arab tambours rolled their thunders forth:
The Cid but stroked his beard, and smiling said:
"Daughters, take heart! The larger yonder host

The shamefuller their defeat; our spoil the greater!
I promised you long since good mates in time:
This day I promise you fair marriage portions!"
He turned; not once again he sought that tower:
Not once he sallied from Valencia's wall
Till the last Moor had landed.
Sirs, to the end!
There where we fought we triumphed; but at last
Our springs of water failed us: then it was
Our Cid put forth his greatness. Earliest dawn
Was glimmering sadly under clouds low-hung
When, in San José's, Don Hieronymo
Sang Mass. He gave the absolution thus:
"This day whoever, Christ's true penitent,
His heart with God, his face to God's chief foe,
Dies for his country, that man's sins shall fly
Backward in cloud; his Soul ascend to heaven!"
The rite complete, that Perfect One exclaimed:
"A boon, my Cid! Your vanguard's foremost place!
God's priest should strike the earliest blow for God."
The Cid made answer: "Be it in His name!"
Then Alvar Fanez thus: "Concede me, Cid,
Three hundred knights that we may bide our time
Within that bosky dell of Albuhera:
The battle at its fiercest, we will on them!"
The Cid replied: "In God's name be it so!"

Ere day with knights five thousand forth he rode,
And, curving round through by-ways in the woods
Dashed on the Moorish rear. New risen and 'mazed,
They deemed some second host was in among them.
That second host was Don Hieronymo
With all his vanguard. "Smite them," still he cried,
"For love of charity!" The battle flame
Upsoared and onward ran like fire o'er woods:
Great deeds were done that day and many a horse
Without a rider spurned the blood-red plain
That flashed with broken breast-plates and with helms;
And now the Moor the Christian now prevailed,
And all the battle reeled as when two storms
Through side-way valleys met in one black gorge
Wrestle and writhe commixed. That day the Cid
Seemed omnipresent, so the Moors averred;
They swore that on his crest a fire there sat
And shone in all the circlings of his sword,
His stature more than man's. Not less in mass
Their dusk battalions hour by hour advanced:
Numbers at last prevailed; and here and there
The Christian host fell back. At once my Cid
Cried to his standard-bearer, "Scale yon rock,
And wave around thy head my standard thrice!"
Forward the standard-bearer rushed. That hour
The monks in far San Pedro's Church entoned

Their customed matin song and promised prayer
For him, the man they loved. The standard-bearer
Waved thrice his standard from that craggy height,
And, as he waved it, shouted thrice "My Cid"
With sound as when the Fontarabian cliffs
Re-echoed Roland's horn. Swifter than moon
Fleeting 'mid stormy hill-peaks forest-girt,
That host by Alvar Fanez hid forth dashed
And flung themselves upon the Moorish flank,
Three hundred spears. The Moors were panic-stricken;
Ere long, half blinded by the westering sun,
They broke, and headlong toward the harbour fled:
Then jesting cried my Cid, "The day declines;
The sun must not go down upon our wrath.
For that cause, Christians, smite, and smite your best!
Your battle-axe be on them till yon orb
Shows but one star-like point!" That point evanished
The fugitives reached the sea. Three times that hour
My Cid closed up upon the flying king,
Yucef, and three times smote his shoulders lithe;
Half dead he reached his ship; but as he leaped
My Cid flung after him the sword Colada;—
It left its mark upon him till his death,
Then sank in sea; next day a diver raised it.
Twelve thousand perished there in ship or wave.
That evening through Valencia's stateliest street,

That Perfect One, Hieronymo, beside him,
Bare-headed rode the Cid. Like creatures winged
Ximena and his daughters rushed to meet him
And kissed his hands and kissed Bavieca's neck;
Great feast was in the palace held that night,
And in the churches great were the thanksgivings
And great the alms bestowed upon the poor,
Christian and Moor alike.
Ere long within Valencia was fulfilled
That vow the Cid had vowed: "Though exiled now,
This hand will give these babes to worthy mates,"
For thither, drawn by rumours of their charms,
Great princes flocked. In after times these maids
Were queens: The elder throned in Aragon,
The second in Navarre.

Don José ceased:
Then shouted loud Don Ivor of Morena
With hands high holden and with eyes upraised,
"O Cid, my Cid, how glorious were thy days!
How many a minstrel sang thee in far lands!
What greetings came from kings! The French king thus,
'Hail, Cid, no king, yet prop of all our kings!
In vain Charles Martel with his Paladins
Had trod the Crescent down on Poitiers' plain
Thy later aid withheld!'"

Then rose once more

That youngest knight and slender as a maid
Who on the earliest of those knightly vigils
Spake thus, "Our earthly life is but betrothal."
Again he spake: The Cid's most happy day
Was one that neither brought him gift nor triumph:
The day when came to him that silent man
Whom from the first his heart had loved and honoured,
The Alcalde Alfaraxi—he of whom
Hieronymo had said, "Watch well yon man,
For when he speaks he'll teach us lore worth knowing."
That day he sought the Cid and thus addressed:
"Sir, I give thanks to God who sent you here!
Here dwelt my forefathers: I loved this spot;
The Christians took me captive yet a child,
And taught me their religion: but my kin
Ransomed me later; with their seers I bode
And won from them all learning of the Moors;
Yea, zealous for their Prophet's law was I.
Now, sir, a man of silence, musing long,
And measuring Christian Faith with Moslem Law,
Albeit on many loosely hangs that Faith
Else I had been a Christian many a year,
My sentence is with Christ and not Mahomet;—
I will to be baptized." Then laughed for joy
My Cid: he kissed that Moor, and caught his hand
And led him straight to where Ximena sat

Crying, "Rejoice! The Alcalde is our brother!"
Ximena heard, and rose, and, like her husband,
That Christian kissed, and largess sent to shrines,
And decked the palace gates because God's Church
Is Gate, as all men know, 'twixt earth and heaven;
And on the morn of Holy Saturday
The font new-blessed, when leaped therein once more
"God's creature, water, holy and innocent,"
His god-mother was she. From that day forth
Gill Diaz was his name. That eve my Cid
Whispered a priest, "I often mused why God
Had sent me hither, not some worthier knight:
Perchance 'twas but to serve one silent soul!"
In three months more Gill Diaz was a saint.
He taught the Cid to rule the Moors with kindness
Judged by their proper law. They loved that Cid
For gracious ways in peace, though fierce in war,
And ofttimes when he passed the gates cried loud,
"Great Cid, our prayers attend thee!"

The young knight ceased. Then glittering from afar,
Again before the altar shone the lights:
Again Ximena 'mid their radiance knelt;
Again arose that saintly "Miserere";
Again those warriors joined the rite august.

IV

The Death of the Cid

The latest of those watchful days had come:
The Knights still held discourse of ancient times
And wonders of the Cid. At last arose
A man silent till then though restless oft,
A silver-haired Castilian flushed of brow:
He spake like one that hides his grief no more.
"Sirs, ye converse of things long past as present,
For still ye laud the Cid who rests with God
And, angel-praised, regards not praise of man,
Yet near things see through mist. Sirs, look around!
Morocco's Soldan knocks against your gates;
His navies close your ports; his hosts this hour
Thrice number those our Great One chased whilome.
To business, sirs! A week, and of those present
Few will survive, I ween."
To him replied
That youngest knight who at their earliest watch
Had said, "Man's earthly life is but betrothal."
"Sirs, it had ill become us, warriors vowed,
Had we discoursed of danger ere our dirge
O'er greatness dead had reached an honest end.

That done, devise we how to save the city."
Then laughing cried, with hands together rubbed,
That mirthful knight, Don Leon de Toledo:
"Devise we counsel, sirs! but wot ye well
Counsel is bootless if the counsellors
Be men of rueful face. Such face, moreover,
Insults our Cid, to whom all wars were jest
And jest at times was sermon in disguise:
Glad man was he—our Cid!"
Don Sanchez then:
"Supreme of jests were this: to place our Cid,
Though dead, upon his horse with face to foe!
Santiago! but to hear his laugh in heaven!
The rogues would fly!"
To him Don Aquilar:
"Brother, your jest was to our Cid no jest,
But serious thought. In sickness twice he cried:
'For this alone is Death a thing unwelcome,
It stays us from the Moors! Should ill confront us
When dead I lie, set me upon my horse;
This arm shall smite them still!'" Don Ramon next
Know ye no more? Ximena told me all.
The Cid, Morocco's navy full in sight,
Confessed to her that peril till then unknown
Compassed the Christian cause. "Bucar," he said,
"Nursing five years his rage, stirs up this day

The total hosts of Barbary against us.
What if our pride of late, or sins beside,
Invoke God's chastening hand?" That fleet arrived,
He, sickness-stricken, cried aloud, "Ah me,
That I should live unprofitable this day!
Raise up, great God, some nobler! Let him walk
Thy knight elect!"
Distressed he lay that night,
Tranquil at morn. He spake: "Fear naught, Ximena!
There came to me last night trial unknown—
Pray God it come no more! A trance fell on me
That was not sleep. Before me sat a man
At sunset in an ancient castle's hall:
Low-bent his forehead rested on his hands:
At last he raised his head: it was my sire,
The man I ever loved the best on earth:
Sad image seemed he of that speechless woe
His when his race and house had suffered shame.
An age methought that dreadful trance endured.
Sudden, like breeze from Pyrenean snows,
Some Breath Divine transpierced my heart:—that Breath
Which cheered me oft at danger's worst. I heard
'Be strong! When night is darkest day is nigh!'
Then all my palace filled with wondrous light
And from that splendour issued forth a Man
Hoary but strong—two keys his girdle bore.

He spake: 'Regard no more yon host, for God
In thirty days will call thee to His peace
Because thou serv'dst Him with true heart though frail,
And lov'dst right well my convent of Cardena.
Thy God will not forsake thee! Like a mist
The Moor shall vanish; and thyself, though dead,
When Spain's high Patron fights that final fight,
Shalt share his victory for thy body's honour.
Likewise that day thou diest the Power accurst
Shall fall in Holy Land; the Faith be free:
The Cross of Christ shine forth from Salem's towers:
And Bullogne's Godfrey live God's knight elect,
Fulfilling thus thy prayer.'"
Thus spake the Cid, and ceased. Ximena fixed
Her eyes upon him. Then the Cid resumed:
"The body's weakness is the spirit's strength.
I saw these things, and more: he came to me,
That boy all beautiful we lost in youth.
You too shall see him soon."
Again he mused, and sudden ended thus:
"Would God that when that final battle joins,
The strength of men might place me on my horse
Facing the Moor; for God, methinks, that hour
Will work some great deliverance for mankind;
Also the greater then will be His praise

When all men cry, 'Twas God, and not our Cid,
Conquered of old: now through the Dead He conquers.'
But let these things be done as they deem best—
Hieronymo, that Perfect One, and these
My cousin Alvar Fanez, and Bermudez.
Gill Diaz I ordain for charge of thee."

Then spake that slender knight and meek as maid:
Sirs, rest assured that wish was not pride-born,
Since what could be more humble than his death?
He bade them bear him to St. Peter's Church,
There entering, spake: "I suffer none to mourn;
Sirs, all that live must die; but know ye this:
Christian who goes reluctantly to God
Is like a soldier who hath ta'en a city
Yet fears to enter it and hail his lord
There new-enthroned and crowned." Full reverently
Then at the Bishop's feet he knelt, and there
Humblest confession made and was assoiled.
They that stood nigh in circle heard his words:—
Great scorn had still our Cid of all concealment:
The words he spake they heard.

Don Sanchez last:
Sirs, in this matter God hath shewn His will
By manifest signs. Regard our Cid! He sits
Beside yon altar, changeless. Sirs, attend!
What time Valencia fell, for months, for years

Far nations sent him gifts; Persia's arrived
The last with camel train and long procession.
"Can Moslem love a Christian?" was our cry!
Sirs, of her gifts the chief, ye know, was this,
A golden Vial, and around it graved
Inscription strange which no man could decipher
Knight, clerk, or stranger. Don Hieronymo
At last confession made: "God sent that Gift,
Not man: and God its import will divulge
When most our need." This likewise, sirs, ye know,
That when that Moor who sang Valencia's dirge,
The Alcalde Alfaraxi, Christian made,
Was shown that Vial sealed from Moslem eye,
He, sage in Persian lore, the inscription read:
"The body of the just man, ere his death
Washed in this balsam shall not see corruption:"
Sirs, in that balsam was our Great One washed
Ere yet he died and hath not seen corruption:
Therefore 'twas God, we know, who sent that Gift!
He sent it that our Cid, the Elect of God,
Should triumph in his death. The battle-field,
Sirs, shall attest my words!
Then rose the cry,
"Place we our Cid upon his horse, Bavieca,
Full armed, and with his countenance to the Moor,

Leaving the rest to God."
That Perfect One,
Hieronymo, next day approved their word,
And Alvar and Bermudez; and, God-taught,
Devised how that high thought should stand fulfilled.
Throughout that day the Christians knelt in prayer—
Prayer great and strong. When pealed the midnight chime
The twelve side altars of St. Peter's Church
Glittered with lights; and, hour by hour, at each
In swift succession Mass on Mass was said
Low-toned by priests that came like shades then passed
With chalice veiled adown the darkling aisles.
At earliest day-break Don Hieronymo,
Before the great high altar standing sole
Offered the all-wondrous Sacrifice Eterne
With absolution given: and all the knights,
Four thousand men, kneeling received their Lord
Then bent long time their foreheads on the ground:
At last they rose with sound as when sea-winds
Blow loud on piny hills, and by that gate
Named "of the Snake" forth from the city rode
Full slowly and in silence. At their head
Upon his horse Bavieca rode the Cid
With awful, open eyes, and in his hand
His sword, Tirzona, pointing to the skies,

Upon his right hand Don Hieronymo,
His left, Gill Diaz, holding each a rein.
Here follows in that sacred legend old
The greatest battle ever fought in Spain,
Though brief, "God's Battle" named. The Chronicler,
Writing for men who inwardly believed
God made the world, and rules it, fearless wrote,
And this his record. Morn by morn, twelve morns,
Morocco's host had stood before that gate
Shouting defiance and their prophet's name,
And, no man answering, mused, "The Cid is dead";
But when that morn they saw the Cid advance
Slowly, his knights four thousand in the rear,
Fear fell upon them whispering each to each,
"He died not! Traitors lied to lure us hither,
Then slay us like one man!" Others averred,
"He died; but God hath raised him from the dead!"
Nearer he drew: distincter grew his face:
Panic divine fell on them. Mists of death
Cumbered their eyes: each heart was changed to ice:
The knights four thousand shouted "Santiago!"
They fled. King Bucar launched on them fresh hosts
In fratricidal war. The Cid and his
Meantime on-moving, reached that fountain cold
Akbar by name, begirt by palm-trees seven—
An Arab saint, men said, had rested there—

Therein, his wont, Bavieca quenched his thirst:
That done, Gill Diaz turned him towards Valencia:
At last no farther would he move, but stood
With forward-planted feet, and head forth held,
Eyeing the battle plain.
Again he saith,
That Chronicler, the Moors, their panic spent,
Surceased from that their fratricidal war
While prophet bald, grim seer, and fakir fierce,
Nursed on mad visions 'mid Arabian peaks
Rushed through the red ranks with uplifted hands
Exhorting and denouncing. Bucar well pleased
Watched from his height the lulling of that storm
And hurrying up with all his great reserves
Missioned long since from every Afric coast,
Tremessian, Zianidian, or Tunisian,
Whate'er vexed Syrtes kens o'er raging waves
Or Atlas through gray cloud—with these begirt,
Their dazzling chivalry and standards green,
Himself in midst of those late-warring hosts
With crown imperial and with sceptre gemmed
Sudden appeared, nor stayed, but vanward passed
Assuming sole command. Back rushed the Moors
Now formed anew, to where the Christian Knights
Waited unmoved though destined as might seem
To certain death and swift, and waiting raised

Once more Spain's shout of onset, "Santiago!"
'Twas heard in heaven! The eyes of either host
Were opened, and they saw the Hills of God
Round them thick-set with knights innumerable
On snow-white steeds and armed in mail snow-white;
Their Chief a wondrous One with helm cross-crowned
Who bore upon his breast a bleeding cross
And raised a sword all fire. The Moslems fled;
Their Soldan first. Later they sware the earth
Upheaved like waves had hurled them t'ward the sea.
That flight was murderous more than battle's worst:
Whole squadrons perished trampled under foot;
Not once they turned on those four thousand knights
Loud thundering in their rear. The harbour reached,
Thousands lay smothered 'mid the ships or waves
By their own armour cumbered to the death—
Among them kings eighteen. The rest made sail
With Bucar to Morocco. Never again
That Soldan looked on Spain.

The rising sun
Shone fair next morning on Valencia's walls
As from them moved a solemn pilgrimage—
Spain's greatest son upon his horse world-famed,
Borne slowly t'ward San Pietro di Cardena.
Upright he sat: upon his right hand walked
His Wife, and on his left Hieronymo

Behind them priests intoning gladsome psalms.
Each evening as they neared their place of rest
Its bishop and his priests approached cross-led,
With anthem and sad dirge. The second day
The Donna Sol, his daughter eldest-born
Beside her Aragonian lord drew near,
And knights a hundred mailed, with shields reversed
Hung from their saddle-bows. Wondering they gazed
So awful looked that dead man yet so sweet,
His household standard o'er him, and his knights
Not funeral-garbed but splendid as beseems
High tournament or coronation feast.
Not thus the Donna Sol. Her glittering tiar
She cast on the earth and wailed. Ximena then:
"Daughter, you sin against your Father's charge;
Lamentings he forbade." Then Donna Sol
Kissed first her father's hand and next her mother's,
And answered low, "In ignorance I sinned."
Elvira, youngest daughter of the Cid,
Next morning joined them with Navarre, her husband:
Silent she wept, knowing her father's will.
Day after day great companies drew nigh
With kings among them regnant in far lands,
Blackening both vale and plain. At last the Cid,
Faithful in death, reached that majestic pile
So loved by him, San Pietro di Cardena:

The abbot, aged now a hundred years,
And all his monks before the portals ranged
Received him silent.
King Alphonso dwelt
That season at Toledo. In sombre silence
He hastened to those obsequies of one
By him so long revered, so scantly loved
And yet to him so helpful at his need;
Long time he stood a-gazing on the dead:
At last he spake: "Spain ne'er had man like that man,
Saw never knight so loyal and so true
So gladsome, simple, holy and brave and sage.
'Twas well for me he never knew his greatness!
In heaven they'll rise to meet him!" Six whole days
He graced the Cid with vigils and with rites
Befitting Christians dead. He willed besides
To lay him in a golden coffin gemmed
Beyond the funeral pomps of Spanish kings.
Ximena would not. Once again the wife
Stood up as stately as the maid that stood
Before Ferrando, making then demand
"Let him who crushed my father's house restore it!"
As calm she answered now that monarch's son:
"It shall not be! There let him sit enthroned,
For many a throne throughout his stormy life
My husband spurned, thus answering, 'Of my sires

No man was king.' Look there! There sits, not lies,
The man, not king, who propp'd the thrones of kings—
There in that house which roofed his exiled babes:
There let him rest." Alphonso at her word
Sent to Toledo for that ivory chair
Raised on a dais where the Cortes met
Yearly, whereon till then had no man sat,
The kingly symbol of an absent king,
And reared it at the right of Peter's altar
And spread thereon a cloth of gold impearled,
And o'er it raised a wondrous tabernacle
Azure, gold-starred, and flushed with arms of kings
The blazonries of Leon and Castile
Navarre and Aragon, and with these the Cid's:
And on Saint Peter's day the King Alphonso,
The Infantes of Navarre and Aragon,
And Don Hieronymo, in sacred state
Throned on that chair the Cid, and round him spread
That purple robe the Persian Soldan's gift,
And reared within his grasp his sword Tirzona,
Whereof the meaning is the "Brand of Fire"—
Not bare but sheathed since now its work was done;
Upon its hilt was graved "Ave Maria":
Likewise before his feet that earlier sword
They laid, Colada, graved with "Yea" and "Nay"

At either side its blade; since plain of speech
The Cid had ever been.
Thenceforth till death
In that magnific pile Ximena dwelt,
Watched by her husband's latest friend, Gill Diaz,
His latest yet most honoured, most beloved,
Serving the poor of God. Long nights she knelt
In prayer beside her lord, lest aught ill-done
Or left undone might bar him from God's Vision,
Though restful with those saints who wait God's time
In that high paradise of Purgatory
Sung by the Tuscan, where Eunoe flows
And Lethe, and Matilda gathers flowers:
Four years fulfilled, in peace and joy she died.
Three days before her death she spake these words
'Twixt sleep and waking to her maidens near:
"I go to be at last in heaven his bride
With whom I lived in troth not spousal here."
Gill Diaz yet remained. Daily he led
His master's charger—no man rode him now—
To where beside a cross a spring uprose
Fresher than Akbar's 'mid those palm-trees seven:
O'er it the old charger bent. Full many a time
There standing, though with thirst unsatisfied,
Troubled he lifted up his ears and listened,
And when he heard his master's voice no more,

Sighed and moved on deject. Two years he lived,
Then died. Before that monastery's gate
Gill Diaz buried him, above his grave
Planting two elms, and dying, gave command,
"Beside Bavieca's grave in turn be mine,
Because both knew to serve."
Here maketh end
That book world-famous, the "Cid's Chronicle,"
Writ by a king, Alphonso named the Wise
Sage in all science and a Troubadour.
Two centuries and a half the Cid was dead:
Then sent Alphonso faithful men and true
Through all the cities and the vales of Spain
To garner up all relics old that song
History or tale had treasured of that man
Who was the manliest man that e'er shed tear,
The tenderest man that ever fought in war,
The lowliest man that e'er rejected thrones:
All these that king into a garland wove.
With England's Arthur and with Charlemagne
The Cid hath place; and since he left this earth
He rests and reigns among the Blest in heaven.

POPE HILDEBRAND BESIEGED IN THE CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO BY THE EMPEROR HENRY IV.

(A.D. 1084)

Hugo,[1] these words may never meet thine eyes:—
What then? My thoughts may reach thy heart not less
Such sympathy occult lives on between us.
I watch thee kneeling under Cluny's vaults;
Then write; then pace once more my fortress prison,
St. Angelo, of old great Adrian's tomb,
Adrian, the sagest of Rome's emperors
The man who, dying, questioned of his soul
In song half sad, half gay. Those Pagans old
Had in them valorous stuff. He guessed not, Hugo,
A spiritual kingdom clasping earth one day
Would find its centre here where sat so long
The Prince of this world crowned! The city's roar
From all its hills shakes ever these gray walls

[1] Hugo, Abbot of Cluny, was the chief friend of Pope Hildebrand.

Or crash more piercing as the roof-tree drops
Of palace, fane, or keep. For leagues around
Yon Infidel's watch-fires shoot their insolent glare;
But scantly dimmed by flying flakes of March
While houseless thousands crouch 'neath arches low
Dead Diocletian's Baths or the Coliseum:
God shield those helpless heads! This two-years' siege
Draws to its close.
Think'st thou I faint among these woes, my friend?
I tell thee, nay! A peasant's son am I,
A nursling of snow-blasts on Tuscan hills
Mocker since youth of winter bears and wolves.
The wound's elsewhere, and from a sharper fang.
Constantine's city, mother-city first
Which raised salvation's sign o'er tower and dome,
Gibbers schismatic drivel. Half the West
Faithful to Faith is faithless to her Lord,
And sells His Heritage for a mess of potage.
O'er fields Christ trod the Impostor's crescent waves:
Thence on to Nilus old and Calpè's crest.
Christ's Sepulchre is bond. Ten years ago
Thus to yon Emperor wrote I—"Sin of thine
Holds the wide East grovelling in dust this hour:
The Emperor should have led God's armies there!
The Emperor's naught. I, priest of God, will lead them.

They wait the crosiered hand."

Hugo, you smile:

What smile like yours for mixed reproach and sweetness?
Storming at priests corrupt I saw it not;
But lavishly if I spake of kings deposed
'Twas ever near, above or 'neath the surface.
Plainly you warned me once: "You'll fail in much,
Succeed in more. You'll win the Church's freedom:
There lies your limit. Kings are lion-cubs:
God sees them ramp and roar, and bears with them:
Fret not thyself!"

Hugo, God bears with them

That they may weep their sins not triumph in sin.
God's Church reveres true emperors, true kings;
They hold from God: the Peoples must obey:
But kings are sworn to rule with truth and right:
The king forsworn his people may depose him:—
Two claimants these: both need an arbitrator
And, free in choice, have chosen as such the Pope.
Are kings thus injured? Kings will cry one day
"That arbitrator's hand raised but a sceptre;
The popular hand an axe."
Kings claim their rights: I claim His rights for God:
All know His Church's freedom is God's right:
They know—these kings—the Pope is bound to guard it:
They know that Christendom reveres that trust;

That by its will—apart from heavenlier claims—
He shields God's Church from wrong.
Hugo, I grant
This royal claim hath pretext. We are rich:
Thence kings are jealous; for that cause in part
They claim investitures and feudal dues:
Wealth wars as oft on freedom as on virtue;
It wars against the Church's. That is ill.
What then? We cannot choose the times we live in.
The people will not see God's Church in rags;
The barons will not venerate whom they fear not;
The baron-bishop, him alone they fear.
These things will change. The kings may win that battle:
The worse for them: the Church will then be free,
Both poor and free. Meantime my course is plain;
To fight God's battle of the day; then pass.
Hugo, a saint contemplative art thou:
I am a sinner militant on earth,
Yet only on transgressors wage I war.
One time you warned me thus: "Though zeal be good
The censor's fire may fall among the brambles,
Leap thence on cedared crests of Lebanon,
Consume their topmost branch." I liked that saying;
I never loved the men most like myself;
Contemplatives I loved: minds such as theirs

Are more than action: barks of God are they
Thought-laden all too deep for rapid keels.
Such Intellect I lack:—it ne'er was mine
With Athanasian insight to detect
The slenderest rift in doctrine's mail: not mine
Augustine-like, deep brooding, to subdue
The old pagan wisdom to the Church's service,
Or with Gregorian chaunt, Ambrosian rite
To charm Christ's flock a-field—
I am an arrow from the bow of God
Sped at a mountain beast.
Those vassal priests
Call me a dreamer. Hugo, you are none,
Have seen no visions. I can guess the cause:
Your whole life long is intellectual vision,
The seeing of the life of spiritual things;
We, men of action, when beside our hand
There lies no act, see visions. Once I saw them;
Not since Life's battle closed around my steps.
At Cluny was my first. You knew it not:
Matins were sung: in chapter sat the monks
You at their head. Your voice rang out denouncing
Monastic sloth. I marked beside you close
A vacant stall. Again I looked: and lo
Within that stall with sorrowing face He sate
Who wore the thorny crown: that hour He wore it,

And on a parchment wrote with hand that bled:
The words He wrote you spake.

Another crash!

Once more far roofs fall in, and flames rush up!
Those archers ken my casement. Fools, to know not
Their shafts but glance from wall to roof! My foot
Still snaps them as I pace. My friend, these things
Are of the moment, not eternity:
Such merit not long thought.

What *mean* yon fires?

This and but this. The men who love not Christ
Love not His Church; and, loving not, abhor her.
Christ only truly sees His Church's face:
At times she wears a sable veil: then cries
The world: "A widow is she, not the Bride!"
At times she wears a denser veil gold-woven;
Then cries the fool: "The world hath wedded her!"
So prate the market babes!

An emperor that!

An emperor! Call ye *that* an emperor? She,
God's Church, made first the Christian emperor.
The thought was great: the hope but half fulfilled.
How palpable the snare that marred that greatness!
The emperor needed not to be a king;
Save for high cause should ne'er have been a king;
His claims were Virtue, Wisdom, Strength: his crown

The badge of Europe's soldier magistracy:
His might was spiritual half; his sword but vowed
Sin to chastise. The Church that—plagued by Rome
For centuries—honoured Rome, her name, her law,
That used her tongue in offices divine,
She crowned her emperor with his Roman title:
She clothed him with dalmatic and with stole
A canon of St. Peter's and St. Paul's,
His name she honoured in the Mass itself!
What more could she have done for him? This boy,
What is he but a heathen king o'er-grown
Who strives to build again the old Asian empire?
I stand in this tomb-tower begirt with fires,
Protector of the peoples and the kings
Against his petulance—ay, but more, far more,
Avenger of God's Kingdom. In thy grave
Turn round, old Leo, of that name the Third,
Whose hands high-lifted crowned thy Charlemagne;
Roll 'neath those shaggy brows thine eyes o'er earth,
And say if on it stand a prince this hour
In whom those eyes had seen an emperor!
Where hid they when for forty years at Rome
Bandits usurping Peter's Chair—
Canossa!
The world will have the telling of that tale;
At last will yield it credence. To Canossa

I bade not yonder boy; he came unsummoned:
If there the frost wind bit him 'twas his choice;
I bade him to depart. A year before
I summoned him to Rome to answer charges;
Reply he made not but convoked at Worms
Gathering of bishops few and false; through these
Deposed Christ's Vicar. I deposed the traitor:
The German kings my sentence ratified
Unless within a year he purged his crime
By frank submission made. That year nigh ebbed
He rushed across the Alps; knelt at my gates;
I knew him false; I saw his aim: 'twas this,
My pardon won, the German league dissolved,
To break his pledge and mock his feigned submission.
This knowing I refused to see his face.
Three days he beat my gates in sackcloth clad:
The snow fell fast. At length through ceaseless prayer,
Matilda's, ay, and, Hugo, thine whose hands
Had held the infant emperor o'er his font,
Against my word reiterate, prescient bodings,
I bade him enter. At my feet he wept;
Tendered submission; pledged eternal faith.
Save for that fraud the lights of Candlemas
Had seen his crown in the dust!
He broke his vow:
That morn which saw him to the Church restored

He knelt within Canossa's castle chapel:
I sang the Mass. In reverence low he bowed;
I proffered him the Blessed Sacrament
But added thus, "In pledge of faithful heart."
Aghast he rose, and, pretext urged, forth fled.
I fixed on him mine eye but spake no word.
Ere passed six days that emperor with a troop
Waylaid my person. To the banks of Po
He lured me on pretence of conference new:
Hard riding saved my life.
In this I erred:
Three years I hurled not forth my final sentence:
Three years a crowned transgressor shamed the world;
Thereof there came much bloodshed. What if I
For that cause fail to tread the Promised Land?
God's will be done! Feet worthier far shall tread it:
I see it—from this height!
'Tis strange, this stillness!
The night is well-nigh spent: the fires burn low:
'Tis stranger yet, that stillness in my breast!
Long years seem nought—I see my childhood's home,
Saint Mary's Convent on Mount Aventine
That overlooks half Rome. Again I note
That white-haired monk draw nigh me; hear him speak;
'Boy, where thou gazest gazed in years gone by
Rome's oldest Augur, and King Romulus.

Ravens eleven in slow, successive flight
Sailed from the East. That Augur watched them long:
Then spake: 'Yon ravens, king, are centuries;
Thy realm will last for centuries ten and one,
Then crumbling, leave its cycle incomplete
Since all is incomplete which is not God.'"
So spake that monk white-haired. I answered thus:
"Ten centuries! thousand centuries fled, God's Church
Will yet be in her prime!"
My youth gone by,
A man way-worn again I stood in Rome;
Again I trod those ivy-mantled halls
Once trod by Sabine Numa, Cincinnatus,
Camillus sage and just. I trod them oft:
A breath passed o'er them from the patriarch days
And made me, for brief space, a ruin-lover.
The Basilics three taught me a nobler lore—
The Lateran, the Vatican, St. Paul's:
These said, "In ruins have not joy, for God
Is of the living, God, and not the dead."
The Imperial ruins never touched my heart;
The Palatine sighed for pomps and pleasures gone:
The Coliseum's crime seemed unatoned:
History stood naked there and full of shames:
The sins of princes living or late dead
Interpreted the horror of the past:

The present prophesied a fouler future:
That Dead Sea of the ages dead which covers
Those cities judged, the empires of old time,
By strange upheavings notified, methought,
Volcanic throes beneath. Daily I learned:
I felt that all the forces deemed extinct
Still lived in Rome, and strove in her. A whisper
Ascended ever from the Catacombs;
"It was God's future made that Roman past:"
A whisper found me from the Capitol,
"King Romulus feared to read that Sibyl's tomes;
The lost books shall be found." Lastly, from heaven
A whisper fell; "Not vain the poor man's prayer!
'Thy kingdom come' means this — the Church's
triumph!"
I willed not to be Pope. Four Popes in turn
This hand pushed front-ward when the popular voice
Called me to Peter's Chair. I drave these four
Successively on great attempts. At last
God wrought His Will.
That hour which made me Pope
Temptation came to me till then unknown,
A thought pride-born, "Build thou a church to him
To whom the Saviour said, 'Thou art the Rock,'
A church three times transcending Constantine's!"
Such act had warred against my true vocation

And left my life a mockery. I was saved.
The consecration past, all Rome rejoiced:
The Coronation feast begun, a missive
Was laid beside me by a hand unseen.
Its words still haunt me, "Keep thine earlier vow:
Make it thy breast-plate and thy diadem.
Dream not that rearing Solomonian fanes
Shall quit thy debt. Austerer tasks are thine.
Lift thou God's besom in a stalwart hand
And cleanse God's threshing-floor! Abase the proud:
Be terrible to heresy and schism,
More terrible to tyranny and greed:
Trample the robber-brood with feet blood-red
As His that treads His wine-press. Save God's Church
Like Leo hurling back the Huns from Rome:
So shalt thou live the lion of God's Tribe;
So, life surceased, inherit on God's hills,
Thine eyes fast fixed upon the Eternal Face,
By Eden springs thine everlasting lair."
Hugo, that hour it was my life began!
That missive read, mine earlier aspirations
Changed to resolves. They warred against three sins:
The first was "Simony"—that leprous plague
Which downward drags the Church's flesh, and leaves
Her bones all glaring. Bishoprics themselves
In public mart were sold like sheep or swine;

The Spirit's gifts—the Spirit Himself, Who still
Lives in His gifts. Men called it "Time's abuse:"
To such I answered, "Better sin the sin
Than, tempted not, thus falteringly reprove it."
The second of those sins, "Investitures!"
This emperor's sire deposed three Popes, yet deemed
He reigned Protector of the Papal Chair.
What makes bad bishops but elections false?
A prince, a layman, puts me forth his hand,
And on the finger of the purchasing priest,
Likeliest some comrade of his losel hours,
Descends a ring! That priest stands up a bishop!
O how unlike such prince to Charlemagne,
So reverent to God's Church, or England's Alfred;
All know his saying: "Kings are kings elsewhere;
Kings in God's Church are simple citizens:"
Edward the Confessor made like confession.
The strife was long! How many bishops holp me?
In Germany but five; in Lombardy
Seven and no more!
Scandal the third—the last—
Cleric concubinage ill named a marriage:
The canons old and use of purest times
Forbade the bond. A Sacrament is marriage,
The image of Christ's bridal with His Church.
God's Church hath ever honoured holy marriage,

Banned all beside. There's nought so like that Church
As hearth of peasant-pure with children girt:
Ay, but a celibate clergy is its fence!
The unfaithful weds the mart, the farm, the shop:
The faithful priest is wedded to his charge;
I have heard such clerics cry, "We are not angels!"
I answered, "No, nor men, if, bound by vows,
Ye lack the strength to keep them."
Work and wait!
The regulars walked as men by hemlock drugged
But late, as now the seculars. Hope nigh dead
A beam went through that mist. 'Twas Hanno's work:
A sudden sickness seized him at Cologne,
His pastoral charge. Within St. Martin's Church
The monks sang matins. From his bed he crawled:
Knelt at the casement, listened, made resolve;
Restored, within a week he sped true monks
To those fair convents twain, Siegberg and Saalfield:
Reform descended on them hundred-handed
And each hand sceptred. Fast the example spread;
New convents rose; the sterner was the rule
The readier loyal hearts to bow before it.
"Touch thou thy mountain-tops, and they shall smoke."
The hand of God had touched the heights. Ere long
The lowlands caught the flame.
Again I see them!

O'er northern Germany the infection raced;
O'er southern next, Suabia, Hungarian wilds,
All hailed that great Reform. The Forest Black
Clasped to its inmost heart the noble guest.
Hirschau was next to claim it; three years sped,
A score of monasteries owned her sway;
Schaffaussen rose, St. Blaise; to these there flocked
Princes and nobles worn in this world's strife
True priests, and youthful knights. Whole villages
Neighbouring those convents gloried in their rule,
Echoed their hymns. In Vallombrosa's woods
Against the storm-laid trunk the kneeling maid
Pressed her pure bosom; children joined her prayer:
Praying, the mason lifted course on course
Unpaid, to breast the storm of centuries
And flash the dawn unrisen o'er golden plains.
I saw those sights: I heard those psalms through crash
Of falling roofs this night. 'Twas these that kept
A heart sore tried unflawed.
This is my mission,
To stand till death Reformer of the Church:
Let none who love her vindicate abuse.
Reform she needs, not once, but age by age
For ever dying like our Alpine forests,
Like them for aye renewed. She dies to live;
Dies locally to sow by tempest winged

The strong seed of her omnipresent life.
Who are her foes? Who mine? Foul, merchant cities,
Despotic monarchs, and the priests world-tamed:
Who are her friends? The poor in every land,
Who, here unglutted, wait God's feast afar;
Devout men; youths high-hearted; feudal lords
Honest and brave; the sons of Benedict;—
Monte Cassino! Ay, 'tis she that aids me!
She breeds me bishops, canonists, missionaries:
This arm grows old: concede Thy Church, great God,
A century of Benedictine Popes—
These shall avenge Thy cause!
I read this night
By lurid lights Saint Chrysostom, thy words:
"Not Heaven itself is stable as God's Church:
She was not made for Heaven but Heaven for her:
God said: 'The heavens and earth shall pass away;'
But of the Church He said, 'Upon this Rock
I build My Church. The gates of Hell shall never
Prevail against it.' Think ye, sons of men,
Its walls are walls of stone? I tell you nay:
Its walls are multitudinous walls of souls;
Its pillars Spirit-Pillars based on Faith."
I read: a Hand from Heaven was on my head:
It stayed me where I stood.

What man is he
That wars against us? He too has a son:
That son will strike that sire as he strikes me.
The end draws near. Henry, I think, will fail:
Guiscard, who wills me well, may prove worse foe:
A flame is he ravening on all he meets,
And liefer far to burn his best friend's house
Than let his least of rivals scape alive.
Long since there are that scatter lies against me;
On me they charge these woes—
I will not draw my sword against my people:
If Rome, this present trouble past, revolts,
With staff and book a pilgrim I depart
Exile on alien shores.
I think that I shall die beside the sea:
I ever loved it: on its beaming marge
I found no littleness. What brings this hour
That image of Salerno's coast before me?
I saw it first with him, its gentle Bishop:
The amenities of that benign sea-clime
About him clung methought. We paced that shore:
Interminably before us spread the deep,
All calm, all splendour, all beatitude.
Thereon—far off—his eyes were fixed: more near,
The unending breaker, high as castle wall,
O'er-arching, and down-toppling fell in thunder.

Armies confronting it had died the death.
I touched his arm, and said; "Look nearer, friend!"
He mused; I spake: "God wills the death of none:
God is all Love. Yet this is true not less,
Through all the infinitudes of God's measureless Being
Justice and Love are one. If men reject
That Love, that Justice needs must mount against them;
Fall—like yon breaker. 'Tis their will, not His."

QUEEN BERTHA'S MATIN SONG

THE morning star was rising,
O'er ocean's tremulous crystal hung;
His bright feet touched the billow,
His glance o'er earth he flung;
On the young Queen he played,
Yet warm and disarrayed,
As, leaping lightly from her pillow,
The golden harp she swayed.
Hide not the clouds among,
Brightest star, and fairest!
Until her song those heavens along
Between thy wings thou bearest.

'Thou that on my dreams
All night long wert beaming,
O'er shining leaves and silver streams
Brighter now art gleaming;
Every fountain hath
Light thy keen smiles give her;

In every bay-leaf's dewy bath
Thy soft swift glances quiver.'
Hide not the clouds among,
Brightest star and fairest!
Until her song those heavens along
Between thy wings thou bearest.

'Heaven doth laugh above,
Earth below is gay,
And souls that walk 'twixt light and love
Shall walk in joy alway,
White as yon lily sweet,
That springs, while cold airs fan it,
A virgin spouse her mate to greet
In thee, glad matin Planet!'
Hide not the clouds among,
Brightest star and fairest!
Until her song those heavens along
Between thy wings thou bearest.

'All the starry hosts
And all the angelic band
At once o'er all the ethereal coasts
Leaped forth at God's command;
But surely from afar
'Twas thee men saw on high,

When darkness fled before the star
Of Christ's Nativity.'
Hide not the clouds among
Brightest star and fairest!
Until her song those heavens along
Between thy wings thou bearest.

'When the earth was made
Stars and angels sang;
When Christ was in the manger laid
More loud the anthem rang;
But louder yet those choirs
The last great morn shall blend
Their heavenly songs and heavenly fires,
While thou dost last ascend.'
Hide not the clouds among,
Brightest star and fairest!
Until her song those heavens along
Between thy wings thou bearest.

THE QUEEN'S ALMS

GLAD as that thrill some princely birth
With hushed yet rapturous omen gracing
The stir as from her palace forth
The young fair Queen came pacing:
But here no pompous guard was set;
No flattering concourse flocked around:
The poor about her gate were met:
The readiest place the poorest found.

Like youthful angels all alert
That Queen dispensed her bounteous load;
On those whom keenest fates had hurt
Her earlier gifts bestowed.
Her face the maniac's rage beguiled;
She turned her now among the ring
And paused, above a poor blind child
The sweetest of her songs to sing!

Kind gifts to some, kind words to more,
Kind looks to each and all she gave,
Which on with them through life they bore
And down into their grave.
Around her feet the children crept
And kissed the grass those feet had trod;
Sad eyes that many a year had wept
With tears of gladness gemmed the sod.

The chiming of the convent bells
Called her at last away to prayer:
Farewell she smiled on their farewells—
And turned; when, unaware,
An old grey man with hands outspread
She marked low-bent on quivering knee:
Over his brow she stooped and said,
"A kiss is all I have for thee."

THE QUEEN'S VESPERS

HALF kneeling yet, and half reclining,
She held her harp against her knees:
Aloft the ruddy roofs were shining
And sunset touched the trees.
From the gold border gleamed like snow
Her foot: a crown enriched her brow:
Dark gems confined that crimson vest
Close-moulded on her neck and breast.

In silence lay the cloistral court
And shadows of the convent towers:
Well ordered now in stately sort
Those royal halls and bowers.
The choral chaunt had just swept by—
Bright arms lay quivering yet on high:
Thereon the warriors gazed, and then
Glanced lightly at the Queen again.

While from her lip the wild hymn floated
  Such grace in those uplifted eyes
And sweet, half absent looks, they noted
  That, surely, through the skies
A Spirit, they deemed, flew forward ever
Above that song's perpetual river,
And, smiling from its joyous track
Upon her heavenly face looked back.

THE QUEEN'S VIGIL

BENEATH and round her queenly bower
So tall the garden pageants grew
With every breeze each moon-lit flower
Was waved the casement through:
White in the radiance glanced the fawn;
Flitted the hare from lawn to lawn
By close, broad firs, that flecked the sheen,
And barred with black the silver green.

Far off, like mighty cliffs, their shade
Over a waste of waves that cast
The castle walls o'er wood and glade
Flung down their darkness vast.
Answering a monarch's joyous call,
Far realms were met in festival:
There flocked the noble and the fair—
The fairest, noblest was not there.

And yet for her no flowers were blowing;
No listening dell or vale profound
Enjoyed her breath: for her was flowing
Nor glassy stream, nor stream of sound:
In vain her song the night-bird squandered:
The winds that through her chamber wandered
And o'er her pillow brushed serene
But found the place where she had been!

The Moon whose glory swelled with light
Each lilied slope and laurelled mound
With touch more sharp and exquisite
Defined one rock cross-crowned.
Like argent flames or spires of frost
Uprose that shape of stone, embossed
With breeze-worn sculptures quaint and mild
Of Maid and Angel, King and Child.

There on her knees the Queen was praying:
On that cold marble leaned her breast;
Prayer after prayer devoutly saying
With palms together pressed.
There for her lord she prayed aloud,
Prayed for her people, blind and proud—
That Heaven would chase away their night,
That God would bathe his heart in light!

KING HENRY THE SECOND AT THE TOMB OF KING ARTHUR

PART I

WHY put the great in Time their trust?
  Whate'er on earth we prize
Of dust was made, and is but dust,
  For all its brave disguise.
No boor but one day with the just
  May triumph in the skies!

Ambition doth but chase a gleam;
  An idle toy the sword!
The crown a mockery; power a dream;
  For Christ alone is Lord.
That lore King Henry learned:—Of him
  I here a tale record.

The tourney past, in festival
  Baron and knight were met:

Last pomp it was that graced the hall
Of great Plantagenet;
A Prince for valour praised by all,
More famed for wisdom yet.

The board rang loud with kingly cheer:
Light jest, and laugh, and song
Rang swiftly round from peer to peer:
Alone on that gay throng
The harper looked with eye severe,
The while in unknown tongue

A mournful dirge abroad he poured;
Sad strains, forlorn, and slow:
Poor wreck of music prized and stored
Long centuries ago
On British hills ere Saxon sword
Had stained as yet their snow.

"Strike other chords," the monarch cried;
"Whate'er thy words may be
They sound the dirge of festal pride:
Warriors not monks are we!
The melodies to grief allied
No music make for me."

The harper's eye with martial fire
One moment shone; no more:
His lips, but now compressed in ire,
A smile disdainful wore
While forth from each resounding wire
Its fiercer soul he tore.

Louder and louder pealed the strain,
More wild, and soul-entrancing:
Picturing now helmets cloven in twain;
Now swords like meteors glancing;
Now trampling hosts o'er hill and plain
Retreating and advancing.

Each measure, mightier than the last,
Rushed forth, stern triumphs wooing;
Like some great angel on the blast
From Heaven to Heaven pursuing
With outspread pinion, far and fast,
A host abhorred to ruin.

The bard meanwhile with cold, stern air,
Looked proudly on the proud,
Fixing unmoved a victor's stare
On that astonished crowd—

'Til all the princes gathered there
Leaped up, and cried aloud :

"What man, what chief, what crownèd head,
Eternal heir of fame,
Of all that live, or all the dead,
This praise shall dare to claim?"—
Then rose that British bard, and said,
"King Arthur is his name."

"What sceptre grasped King Arthur's hand?"
"The sceptre of this Isle."
"What nations bled beneath his brand?"
"The Saxon foe erewhile."
"His tomb?" was Henry's next demand—
"He sleeps in yonder pile."

Forth went the King with all his train,
At the mid hour of night;
They paced in pairs the silent plain
Under the red torch-light.
The moon was sinking in her wane,
The tower yet glimmered bright.

PART II

THROUGH Glastonbury's cloister dim
The midnight winds were sighing;
Chanting a low funereal hymn
For those in silence lying,
Death's gentle flock 'mid shadows grim
Fast bound and unreplying.

Hard by, the monks their Hours were saying;
The organ evermore
Its wave in alternation swaying
On that smooth swell upbore
The voice of their melodious praying
Toward heaven's eternal shore.

Ere long a princely multitude
Moved on 'neath arches grey
Which yet, though shattered, stand where stood
(God grant they stand for aye!)
Saint Joseph's church of woven wood
On England's baptism day.

The grave they found; their swift strokes fell
Piercing dull earth and stone.

They reached ere long an oaken cell,
And cross of oak, whereon
Was graved, "Here sleeps King Arthur well
In the Isle of Avalon."

The mail on every knightly breast
The steel at each man's side
Sent forth a sudden gleam: each crest
Bowed low its plumèd pride:
Down o'er the coffin stooped a priest—
But first the monarch cried,

"Great King! in youth I made a vow
Earth's mightiest son to greet:
His hand to worship; on his brow
To gaze; his grace entreat.
Therefore, though dead, till noontide thou
Shalt fill my royal seat!"

Away the massive lid they rolled—
Alas! what found they there?
No kingly brow, no shapely mould;
But dust where such things were.
Ashes o'er ashes, fold on fold—
And one bright wreath of hair.

Genevra's hair! like gold it lay;
For Time, though stern, is just,
And humblest things feel last his sway,
And Death reveres his trust.—
They touched that wreath; it sank away
From sunshine into dust!

Then Henry lifted from his head
The Conqueror's iron crown:
That crown upon that dust he laid,
And knelt in reverence down,
And raised both hands to heaven and said
"Thou God art King alone!

"Lie there, my crown, since God decrees
This head a couch as low.
What am I better now than these
Six hundred years ago?
Henceforth all mortal pageantries
I count an idle show."

Such words King Henry spake: and ere
The cloistral vaults had felt
Along their arches damp and bare
The last faint echo melt
The nobles congregated there,
On that cold pavement knelt:

And each his coronet down laid,
And Christ his King adored,
And murmured in that mournful shade
"Thou God alone art Lord:
Like yonder hair, at last shall fade
Each sceptre, crown, and sword."

THE INFANT BRIDAL

PART I

Of old between two nations was great war.
Its cause no mortal knew; nor when begun;
Therefore they combated so much the more,
The sire his sword bequeathing to the son;
Till gentleness and joy had wholly fled,
And wellnigh every hand with blood was red.

In vain the mother wept; her sighs were blown
Away by the loud gust of popular rage;
In vain the young fair widow made her moan;
In vain the tender virgin would engage
Her love to gentler thoughts; he rushed to arms,
Proud of her beauty pale and loud alarms.

Glory, for Honour a blind substitute
In hearts aspiring and a servile will
On to the battle chased them. Man and brute
Horseman and horse, by the same trumpet-thrill

Were borne into the frenzy of red fields
Ghastly ere night with dead upstaring from their shields.

Glory at first, and after Glory, Shame;
Shame to propose the compact, first to bend;
And Fear, which masks full oft in valour's name,
And doth false honour like a shade attend—
Fear to be thought to fear—these plagues did urge
The maniacs forward with a threefold scourge.

Both kingdoms raging thus in fever fit,
More direful every hour became their spleen:
The sleeping boy full oft his brow would knit
Against a foeman he had never seen;
Full oft the man of venerable hairs
Bowed to the dust his head depressed by griefs and cares.

Valley and town lay drowned in tears and sorrow;
Each noontide trembled with perturbed annoy,
And no one dared expect a kindlier morrow:
To be a mother was no more a joy:
Hope no more hovered o'er the cradle. Love
Wept; and no friend had heart such anguish to reprove.

How often to a little sleeping child
Smiling and sleeping on the mother's knee,
That mother thus complained, "Ah, little child!
God only knows if it be good for thee
My comforter, my solace, to have come
Down to this world so harsh and wearisome!

"Happy awhile with me thy spirit dwells;
Awhile contented 'mid the petty range
Of daily things to thee all miracles;
For arms thou dost not sigh nor pant for change;
Thy dreams are bloodless: thou dost smile when sleeping,
In Eden founts thy newborn fancies steeping.

"Ah, must that brow, so clear, so smooth, so white,
By a hard ruthless helm be one day pressed?
Ah, must the red lance in its murderous might
One day pierce through and gore that tender breast?
Ah, little infant! must thou lie one day
Far, far from me, cold clay upon cold clay?

"Wherefore so fast do these thy ringlets grow?
Stay, little child, be alway what thou art,
That I may ever while the rough winds blow
Clasp thee as now and hide thee in my heart.

Who taught thee those new words? I fear each day
To hear thee cry, 'Mother, I must away.'

"Is this to be a mother? I am none—
And yet I fear to lose a gift not prized:
Is this, ah God, to have a little son?
Are these my prayers? my dreams thus realised?
Defrauded of my own while visibly here,
How can I hope, O child, to deck far off thy bier?"

PART II

THE hosts, in silence marching all the night
At sunrise met upon the battle plain:
The monarchs there engaged in single fight:
There by a rival's hand was either slain.
Long time men stood in gloom, stern, and sad-hearted;
Then, bound by solemn vows, homeward in peace departed.

A counsel went there forth. Each king had left
Behind a blooming infant; one a boy,
A girl the other; both alike bereft;
Both innocent; both meet for love and joy;
Both heirs of sorrow. Holy Church these twain
Shall join in one, men cried; and peace be ours again.

Who first devised the expedient no one knows.
Perhaps old sages, after long debate
And loud lament of immemorial woes,
Bending their deep brows in a hall of state
Conceived the project; and from Fancy sought
A cure for ills by rage fantastic wrought.

Some chief perhaps of all his sons bereft
And now half blind in his forlorn old age
Cried loud in anguish, while his tower he left
To hide him in a moss-grown hermitage
"Hear ye my words and on your hearts engrain them,
Love gave me many children: Hate hath slain them."

Haply some maiden for the war deserted
Exclaimed, "I would that little warlike pair
Had loved as long as war the loved hath parted."
Perhaps kind angels called her wish a prayer.
Enough: I tell an ancient legend, told
By better men than I, long dead and cold.

While the young bride in triumph home was led
They strewed beneath her litter branches green
And kissed light flowers then rained them on a head
Unconscious as the flowers what all might mean.
Men as she passed them knelt; and women raised
Their children in their arms, who laughed and gazed.

That pomp approaching woodland villages
  Or shadowing convents piled near rivers dim
The church-bells from grey towers begirt with trees
  Reiterated their loud, wordless hymn;
And golden cross and snowy choir serene
Moved on old trunks and older towers between.

An hour ere sunset from afar they spied
  The city walls, dark myriads round them clinging:
Now o'er a carpeted expanse they glide
  Now the old bridge beneath their tread is ringing:
They reach the gate; they pass the towers below;
And now once more emerge, a glittering show!

O what a rapturous shout receives them, blending
  Uncounted bells with chime of human voices!
That fortress old, as on they wind ascending
  Like the mother of some victor chief rejoices.
From every window tapestries wave: among
The steep and glittering roofs group above group they throng.

The shrine is gained. Two mighty gates expanding
  Let forth a breeze of music onward gushing
In pathos lulled yet awful and commanding;
  Down sink the crowds at once their murmur hushing.

Filled with one soul, the smooth procession slowly
Advances with joined palms cross-led and lowly.

Lo! where they stand in yon high, far-roofed chamber—
  Martyrs and Saints in dyed and mystic glass
With sumptuous haloes, vermeil, green and amber
  Flood the far aisles and all that by them pass:
Rich like their painter's visions—in those gleams
Blazoning the burden of his Patmian dreams!

A forest of tall lights in mystic cluster
  Like fire-topped reeds from their aerial station
Pour on the group a mild and silver lustre:
  Beneath the blessing of that constellation
The rite proceeds—pure source whence rich increase
Of love henceforth and piety and peace.

Small was the ring, and small in truth the finger!
  What then? the faith was large that dropped it down:
A faith that scorned on this base earth to linger
  And won from Heaven a perdurable crown.
A germ of Love at plighting of that troth
Into each bosom sank; and grew there with its growth.

The ladies held aloft the bridal pair:
  They on each other smiled, and gazed around

With lofty mien benign and debonair
Their infant brows with golden circlet bound:
The prelates blessed them and the nobles swore
True faith and fealty by the swords they bore.

Home to the palace, still in order keeping
That train returned, and in its stateliest room
Laid down their lovely burden all but sleeping
Together in one cradle's curtained gloom;
And lulled them with low melody and song
And jest passed lightly 'mid the courtly throng.

PART III

Ah, lovely sight! behold them—creatures twain
Hand in hand wandering through some verdant alley,
Or sunny lawn of their serene domain,
Their wind-caught laughter echoing musically;
Or skimming in pursuit of bird-cast shadows
With feet immaculate the enamelled meadows.

Tiptoe now stand they by some towering lily
And fain would peer into its snowy cave:
Now, the boy bending o'er some current chilly,
The feebler backward draws him from the wave;

But he persists and gains for her at last
Some bright flower from the dull weeds hurrying past.

Oft if some agèd priest the cloister crossed
Both hands they caught; and bade him explicate,
That nought of good through idlesse might be lost,
At large all duties of the nuptial state;
And oft each other kissed with infant glee
As though this were some great solemnity.

In some old missal sometimes would they look
Touching with awe the illuminated page;
And scarce for tears the spectacle might brook
Of babes destroyed by Herod's murderous rage.
Here sank a Martyr in ensanguined vest:
With more familiar smile there beamed the Virgin blest.

Growing, their confidence as quickly grew;
Light pet and childish quarrel seldom came:
To make them lighter yet and yet more few
Their nurse addressed them thus—an ancient dame—
"Children, what perfect love should dwell I ween,
'Twixt husband and young wife, 'twixt King and Queen.

"The turtle, widowed of her mate, no more
Lifts her lone head but pines, and pining dies;

In many a tomb 'mid yon Cathedral hoar
Monarch or Knight beside his lady lies:
Such tenderness and truth they shewed that fate
No power was given their dust to separate.

"Rachel not less, and Ruth, of whom men read
In book ordained our life below to guide,
Loved her own husband each, in word and deed,
Loved him full well nor any loved beside:
And Orpheus too and Pyramus men say,
Though Paynim born, lived true, and so shall live for aye.

"What makes us, children, to good Angels dear?
Unblemished Truth and hearts in pure accord:
These also draw the people to revere
With stronger faith their King and Sovereign Lord.
Then perfect make your love and amity
Alway: but most of all if men are by."

Such lore receiving ofttimes hand in hand
Those babes walked gravely: at the garden gates
Meantime the multitude would flock and stand
And hooded nuns looked downward from their grates.
These when the Princes marked they moved awhile
With loftier step and more majestic smile:

Or sat enthroned upon some broidered bank
  The lowlier flowers in wrecks around them thrown
Shadowed with roses rising rank on rank:
  And there, now wreathed, now leaning into one,
They talked, and kissed, again and yet again
To please good Angels thus, and win good men.

Swift rolled the years. The boy now twelve years old
  Vowed to the Cross and honourable war
For Palestine deserts our northland cold.
  Her husband—playmate—is he hers no more?
Up to his hand, now timid first she crept,—
"Farewell," he said; she sighed: he kissed her and she
    wept.

A milk-white steed; a crest whose snowy pride
  Like wings or maiden tresses drooped apart;
A Cross between; and every day new dyed,
  Fair emblem on his shield, a bleeding heart,
Marked him far off from all. Not mine to tell
What fields his valour won, what foes before him fell.

No barbarous rage that host impelled, but zeal
  For Christian Faith and sacred rites profaned;
And Triumph smiled upon the avenging steel
  That smote the haughty and set free the chained.

Foremost he fought. In Victory's final hour
Star-bright he shone from Salem's topmost tower!

Swift as that Fame which like an Angel ran
Before him on a glory-smitten road
Homeward the princely boy returned, a man.
A lovelier angel graced their old abode:
But where his youthful playmate? where? half dazed
Each on the other's beauty wondering gazed.

Strange joy they found all day in wandering over
The spots in which their childish sports had been,
Husband and wife whilome, now loved and lover;
A broken light brightened yet more the scene.
Night came: a gay yet startled bride he led,
Old rites scarce trusting, to the bridal bed.

No more remains of all this ancient story.
They loved with love eternal: spent their days
In peace, in good to man, in genuine glory:
No spoils unjust they sought, nor unjust praise.
Their children loved them and their people blessed—
God grant us all such lives—in Heaven for aye such rest!

ST. FRANCIS AND PERFECT JOY

FROM THE FIORETTI DI S. FRANCESCO

ARGUMENT

St. Francis, walking one day from Perugia to St. Mary of the Angels, chief house of the Franciscan Order then newly founded, instructs Brother Leone as to that in which Perfect Joy consists.

BLESSED Saint Francis in the winter time
When half the Umbrian vales were white with snow
And all the northward vine-stems rough with rime
Walked from Perugia down. His steps were slow,
Made slow by thought; yet swift at times, for love
Showered o'er his musings, fired them from above.

Right opposite, high on Assisi's hill,
The Saint was born, child of a wealthy house;
And though corrupt delights abhorring still
The revel he had shunned, and wild carouse
Not less in camps and 'mid the festal throng
At times the youth had lived; yet not for long.

For from the Eternal Altar in the skies
The Kingly Prophet and the Victim Priest
Standing with hands out-stretched had bent His eyes
One moment on him. Straight, from earth released,
The Saint predestined cast her lures aside
And Holy Poverty espoused—his Bride.

Love, perfect made, lives in the Loved alone;
All gifts by him unshared it spurns as dross;
He who for earth's sake left His heavenly throne
From earth accepted one sole gift—the Cross:
That day Saint Francis on that Cross and Him
Mused ever as he walked, with eyes tear-dim.

At last thus spake he to that Brother meek
For hours sole comrade of his silent way
"Leone, lamb of Christ, the words I speak
Write down and ponder well some far-off day;
For truth remains; but men are winds that pass
Like those brief gusts that bend yon stiffening grass.

"Leone, we, the least of men, have striven
An Order to uprear of Orders least;
If God, who ofttimes from His feast hath driven
The proud, and shared Himself the beggar's feast
Should dower that new-born Order with such grace
That one day it shall stand the first in place;

"If in each land the Brothers Minor shone
Resplendent with a sanctity so high
That all men thronged to hear their word and none
Who heard in mortal sin was known to die,
All crowns of earth to this were but a toy;
Yet write that this would not be Perfect Joy."

Another mile that road ice-filmed they trod
While sank the sun, and 'gainst their faces blew
Bitterer the blast; then stood the man of God
And thus with kindling cheek began anew;
"Leone, little lamb of Christ, attend!
Write down my words, and inly apprehend.

"Leone, if through all the earth in fear
Before the Brothers Minor demons fled;
If in all lands they caused the deaf to hear
The blind to see, and raised the buried dead,
All this, though greatness proof 'gainst Time's alloy
And clear from stain, would not be Perfect Joy."

Again pushed on the twain through vapours frore
And wayside boughs curdled with frozen rain;
But now Leone paced the Saint before
And oft his whitening fingers chafed for pain;
Again Saint Francis stood; and with a mien
As though the Vision Blest his eyes had seen

Resumed, but louder; "Little lamb, give ear!
Write thus, that if the Brothers Minor flung
All nets of knowledge round the spiritual sphere
And spake once more each Pentecostal tongue,
And depth on depth in Scripture hid explored,
And dragged the Soldan bound to Christ, his Lord;

"If, lastly, through all realms they sped His Faith
Triumphant as on Angels' necks and wings,
And raised in Holy Land from shame and scath
His just ones, abjects now of turbaned Kings
Potent alone to abase and to destroy,
These things, though great, would not be Perfect Joy."

When three times now Leone thus had heard
From lips so loved the self-same oracle
He stood in wide-eyed wonder without word:
At last he spake; "I pray thee, Father, tell
What thing is Perfect Joy; how won? where found?
In heaven do Angels share it with the Crowned?"

Blessed Saint Francis raised his thin, small hand
And pointed to a chapel now not far
That lonely rose amid the dusking land
Backed by the dull red sky and evening star;
Scarce larger than a huge tree's hollow bole
That chapel seemed, their day-long journey's goal.

"Saint Mary of the Angels" it was named;
That Order destined soon o'er earth to spread
As yet no statelier Mother-House had claimed;
Four hermits grey from Palestine, men said,
Long centuries past those sacred walls had reared;
Though time-worn, still they stood by all revered.

Round them not yet had risen that temple graced
With countless spoils from quarry and from mine
Which clasps this hour 'mid splendours undisplaced
That precinct old, its boast, its joy, its shrine,
Delight of pilgrim bands that, year by year,
Seeking its pardoning grace[1] in faith draw near.

Still toward that spot the Saint held forth his hand—
Ere long a cloud of mingled sleet and snow
That seemed as on it drifted to expand
Drew nearer to that humble fane and low:
It passed; and plainly in the lessening light
Shone out the chapel, now with snow-flakes white.

Then spoke the Saint: "Leone, see'st thou there
Our happy home? If we who left it late
So bright, so glad, so silent, and so fair
Should cower snow-clad ere compline by its gate,

[1] The Indulgence of the Portiuncula.

And sue admittance, crying, 'Porter, wake!
Receive thy Brethren for the Master's sake!'

"And if that porter, loth to leave his bed,
Should answer from within, 'Impostors base!
Come ye to gorge the olives and the bread
Reserved for orphans and the sick? give place!
This knotted staff for backs like yours were best;
Hence! Psalms are over, and the Brethren rest:'—

"And if, an hour gone by, once more we came
And prayed: 'Great Sir, unbar to us the door;
Two Brothers Minor spent thy pity claim
Wanderers way-worn, heart-weary, and foot-sore;'
And he made answer: 'Hence! for, though I sleep,
For bandits masked my wolf-hounds vigil keep:'

"And if, two hours gone by, again we sued
And forth that porter rushed with staff and hound,
Doubtless not knowing us in his Cain-like mood,
And left us on the snows bleeding and bound,
Till now on the blank road the morning shone,
And we at heart had cherished petulance none,

"Nor uttered contumelious word the while,
But mused all night on Christ and on His Cross,

And thanked Him that He deigned with us, though vile,
To share it, gain supreme disguised in loss,
And endless bliss won by an hour's annoy,
Leone, Brother, that were Perfect Joy.

"Leone! That, and every grace beside,
Is gift of God to nought man boasts akin:
Great sin it were to turn God's gifts to pride:—
This gift, slaying self-love, forestalls such sin!
Well cried the Apostle, pain-emparadised,
'Glory in this I will—the Cross of Christ.'"

ROBERT BRUCE'S HEART;

OR, THE LAST OF THE CRUSADERS

"THIS tediousness in death is irksome, lords,
To standers-by: I pray you to be seated:"
Thus spake King Robert dying in his chair.
His nobles and his knights around him stood
Silent, with brows bent forward. He continued:
"Because ye have been loyal, knights and peers,
I bade you hither, first to say farewell;
Next, to commend to you a loyalty
Not less but greater, to your country due,
For I to her was loyal from the first.
She lies sore shaken; guard her as a mother
Her cradled babe, a man in strength his sire.
Guard her from foreign foes, from traitors near,
Yea from herself if evil dreams assail her.
Sustain her faith; in virtue bid her walk
Before her God, a nation clad with light."
He spake; then sat awhile with eyes close shut.

At last they opened; rested full on one
The sole who knelt: large tears—he knew it not—
Rolled down his face: 'twas Douglas. Thus the King:
"That hour we spake of oft, yet never feared
O best and bravest of my friends, is come.
James, we were friends since boyhood; side by side
We stood that hour when I was crowned at Scone,—
Crowned by a woman's hand when kinsmen none
Of hers approached me. Many a time we two
Flung back King Edward's powers. Betrayed, deserted,
By bloodhounds tracked we roamed the midnight moors:
I saw thy blood-drops stain Loch Etive's rocks;
Thy knees sustained my head when, faint with wounds,
Three days on Rachrin's island-shores I lay.
One night—rememberest thou that night?—I cried,—
Randolph, I think, stood near us,—thus I cried:
'Give o'er the conflict! Bootless is this war:
Would God we battled in the Holy Land
For freeing of Christ's Tomb!' Then answer'dst thou:
'Best of Crusaders is that king who fights
To free his country slaved!'" Douglas replied,
"I said it, sire; God said it too, and crowned you.
God, if he wills, can make you yet Crusader;
In death Crusader—yea, or after death."

The King sighed slightly, and his eyelids sank;
Again he spake, though now with wandering mind:

"Randolph was there. Rightly thou savedst his honour,
Though breaking thus the mandate of thy king.
Ah me! All earthly honour is but jest."
Later his eyes unclosed; and with strong voice
And hand half raised as if it grasped a sceptre
He spake: "My youthful dream is unfulfilled—
That sin I sinned, when Comyn died, forbade it:
Not less one tribute I would pay to God;
Leave man one fair ensample.
Yon case of silver is a reliquary—
Seal thou therein my heart when dead I lie:
In the Holy Land inter it."
Three weeks passed,
Five ships were freighted, and the Douglas sailed,
Bearing that reliquary on his breast
Both day and night. He fared not forth alone,
For lords as many companied him as sailed
With good Sir Patrick Spens, what time he bore
Scotland's fair daughter, "Maid of Norway" named,
To be the North-King's bride. Those lords of old
Saw never more their native land. They died,—
Died at the feet of that sea-warrior grey
When, tempest-wrecked on their return, their bark
Went down 'mid roaring waves. Tempest as fierce
On the head of Douglas broke. A Spanish port
With inland-winding bosom bright and still

Received him; and Alphonso of Castile
Welcomed, well pleased, with tournament and feast
A guest in all lands famed.
The parting day
Had almost come; disastrous news foreran it.
Granada's Sultan with his Saracen host
Had broken bound, and written on his march
His Prophet's name in fire. Alphonso craved
Aid of his guest. In sadness Douglas mused;
At last he spake: "Sir King, unblest is he
That knight whom warring duties rend asunder:
My King commanded me to Palestine!
For thirty days that word was in mine ears
'Neath all our festal songs. A deeper voice
Assails me now, mounting from that great Heart
Shrined on this breast. Thus speaks it: 'That command
I gave thee knowest thou not I countermand,—
I who from righteous battle ne'er turned back?'"
The Douglas drooped his head; a trumpet-peal
Shrilled from afar. He raised that head; he spake:
"Alphonso of Castile, my choice is made;
With thee I march!" The Scottish knights drew swords;
Shouted "Saint Andrew!" and the knights of Spain
Made answer, "Santiago!"
Long or e'er

The next sun rose, and while the morning star
Saw still its own face glassed in eastern seas,
Its radiance saw flashed from the floods, that, swollen
By melting snows, thundered through dark ravines,—
As brightly flashed as e'er from Cedron's stream
Or Siloa's sacred wave,—in that fair hour
The hosts united marched. Ere long they met
On a wide plain with white sierras girt
The Prophet's sons, for centuries their foes.
The Moors were to the Christians three to one.
For hours that battle-storm was heard afar;
Numbers at last prevailed; and on the left
The standard of the Cross some whit lost ground:
Douglas restored the battle. On the right
His Scottish knights and he drove all before them.
The Moors gave way; fleet were their Arab steeds
And better than their foes they knew the ground.
Far off they formed anew; they waved again
Their moonèd flags, and crescent scimitars
Well used to reap the harvest-fields of death.
Once more they shouted "Allah!" Spent and breathless,
The northern knights drew bridle on a slope
A stone's-throw distant. Douglas shouted, "Forward!"
None answered. Sadly—not in wrath—he spake:
"O friends, how oft on stormy war-fields proved!

This day what lack ye? Naught save an example!"
Forward he spurred; he reached the Saracen van;
He raised on high that silver shrine; he cried,
"Go first, great Heart, as thou wert wont to go;
Douglas will follow thee and die." He flung it:
Next moment he was in among the Moors.
The Scots knights heard that word; they saw; they charged.
Direful the conflict; from a hill Alphonso
Watched it, but, pressed himself, could spare no aids:
He sent them when too late.
The setting sun
Glared fiercely at that fugitive Moorish host;
Shone sadly on that remnant, wounded sore,
Which gazed in circle on their Great One dead.
His hands, far-stretched, still grappled at the grass:
His bosom on that silver shrine was pressed:
His last hope this—to save it.
They returned,
That wounded remnant, to their country's shores:
With them they bore the Bruce's Heart; yet none
Sustained it on his breast. In season due
The greatest and the best of Scotland's realm
Old lords high-towered on river-banks tree-girt,
Old Gaelic chiefs that ruled in patriarch state
The blue glens of that never-vanquished land,

Grave shepherd-prelates, guiding with mild awe
Those flocks Iona's sons had given to Christ,—
In sad procession moved with sacred rites
From arch to arch of Melrose' holy pile
Following King Robert's Heart before them borne
'Neath canopy of gold, and there interred it
Nigh the high altar. Peasants pressed around
Countless that hour. Some whispered, "Meet it was
Here, in this place, to inter our Robert's Heart;
For though he never fought in Holy Land—
He might not, since for our sake God forbade it—
That heart was a Crusader's." James of Douglas,
In later ages named "the Good Earl James,"
Was buried in the chancel of Saint Bride's
Near his ancestral castle. Since that day
The Douglas shield has borne a Bleeding Heart
Crowned with a kingly crown.

There are who say
That on the battle-morn, but ere the bird
Of morn had flung far off that clarion peal
Which chides proud boastings and denial base,
King Robert stood beside the Douglas' bed
With face all glorious, like some face that saith
"True friends on earth divided meet in heaven."

JOAN OF ARC

THE ARGUMENT

Joan was the daughter of a shepherd who dwelt on the north-eastern frontier of France. As she kept her father's sheep three Voices of Saints ever and anon conversed with her of things divine; but the Saints themselves she saw not. Later these Voices said to her: "It is God's will that thou should'st go unto Dauphin Charles at Chinon, and next deliver Orleans, and after that take the Dauphin to Rheims that he may be crowned King." These three tasks being accomplished, the maid desired greatly to return to her parents, but was wrought on to fight yet longer. After that she was taken prisoner, and condemned to death as a sorceress. Then all France, reverencing great deeds and yet more her holy death, rose up and drove the invaders forth from the realm.

SHE heard a voice well known, but saw no shape:
"Maid, more a maid than all the maids of France
Who ever kissed, then plucked, her fleur-de-lys,
Leave on that bank thy crook of shepherdess,
That lamb whose head is couched upon thy knee.
Get thee to Chinon: heedless there abides
Thy prince, a weakling 'mid a wanton court.
Tell him that, since nor valiant man nor wise

Avails to raise him to his father's throne,
God lays on thee that mission—thee that ne'er
Hast lifted sword, since strength is God's alone.
To Vaucouleurs! There speak with Baudricourt."
Then answered she whom all men called "The Maid,"
The slight, pale damsel with the naked feet,
Red lips, red kirtle, visionary eyes:
"Others behold thy face; thy voice alone
I hear, and oft have heard, and love it well,
Saint Michael, Prince of all those heavenly Powers
That o'er the crystal battlements of heaven
Hurled forth that rebel rout accurst. I go."
Then 'twixt the eyes she kissed her little lamb
And laid it down; and on her homeward way
She heard a second voice, yet nothing saw
(Faith comes by hearing). Thus the sweet voice spake:
"Maid, when thou seest that prince thou think'st on ever,
Arouse his nobler nature speaking thus:
'Sleepest thou, my Prince? If so, to me, a maid,
Grant horse and arms! To Orleans I must ride;
With me such men as list and these alone.
That alien host leaguering its walls shall vanish
And France, that sign discerned, shall right thy wrong.'"
Listening that voice the maid had knelt. It ceased.
She rose and spake: "Great Alexandrian Saint,
Catherine! Full well I recognise that voice

Which drew to Christ the famed Egyptian seers,
Beside old Nile delightedly o'ercome.
Of all the legends in that blazoned book
I love that tale the best. I see thee not;
But when I hear that voice I dream that face,
That smile which o'er it spreads, while slowly, slowly,
That Babe, forth leaning from His Mother's arms,
Adown thy finger draws His bridal ring.
Thy mandate I obey."
She walked once more;
But ere her home was reached a voice, the third,
Found her. 'Twas voice accustomed to command.
"Maid, when the foe hath fled before thy face,
Orleans is free, ride thou beside that prince
Who should be, yet who is not, king of France,
To Rheims! and when the crown is on his head
Give thanks. Thy mission then is past. Abide not.
Give thanks, and to thy parents' roof return."
Again the kneeler, rising, spake: "Great Queen,
Thou too didst crown a king; for through thy prayers
Winning thy lord, thou gavest his realm to Christ,
Who conquered it to crown it with His glory.
Margaret of Scotland, I obey thy word!"
She spake, then sought, quick-paced with brightening eye
Her parents' home beside its murmuring brook

Its "fairy tree"—she oft had danced beneath it—
And church five centuries old. She told them all:
She told them how those Voices, wont till then
To say, "Work hard, be strong, be not a dreamer—
Eternity suffices for repose—"
Their great behest, long promised, had imposed.
Her parents bade her thrice repeat her tale.
They liked it not. They willed her to remain
And tend their flock. Not less they knew their child;
Had ofttimes marked in her some touch divine,
Oftenest when tendering alms, or rapt in prayer.
They knew no wish for praise had touched her ever,
That earth's temptations twain to her were nought;
The world for her existed not; "the body"—
Hers seemed but "spirit draped." God and His Church,
Her king, her country,—she had lived for these
Her seventeen years. Oft seemed she younger far;
For as, death past, the dead grow beautiful,
And youth in part returns, tenderly thus
Sleep dealt with her. Her lids had scarcely dropt
When changed the maiden face to face of child,
A child of twelve years old. When morning dawned
The old Priest who best had known her bade her speed:
She lingered long, back gazing. Thus she spake:
"Ah, loving parents mine, how much I owe you!—

Ah, little sister mine, thy loving heart
Will beat no more 'gainst mine for many a night."
To Vaucouleurs she passed; saw that brave man,
Its ruler, Baudricourt. He never doubted;
The maid was no impostor. Keenly he marked
That ever with her soarings wisdom joined
Insight with zeal. All northern France, he said,
O'er-swarmed that hour with wild and wandering bands
Lawless alike, all false, all sanguinary,
That sang chivalrous courtesy, then fired
Castle and cot. He bade her shun alike
These and the guarded posts. The old warrior spake
With reverence, not with condescending kindness,
With reverence such as eld feels oft for youth,
Knowing how great a thing is innocence.
He ended thus: "I am no preacher, maid:
Counsellors more sage, I think, have told you sometimes
That strong illusions mock at times high aims.
'Tis true. Yet this is true not less, that faith
Conjoined with humbleness hath power to change
Dangers to glories. God hath given you faith:
Pray God it walk beside you all your life,
Sustain you at your death." The old man's eyes
Grew misted as he spake that last word "death."
She marked it and remembered oft. Next morn

He blessed her, and they parted.
On she pushed
Through fields and thorny woodlands. Some aver
That, tasked by stoniest paths, her slender feet
Bled never, 'mid the miry showed no stain;
That on green downs the lambs around her played;
The bird sole-singing on the quivering spray
Cheered her, while furry shapes peered out from holes;
That cottage inmates gave her bread and placed
Their infant in her arms and bade her bless it
And watched her long departed. Yea, 'tis said
A boy of six years old from hill to hill
Watched her six hours and more.
On moonlight nights
Her head oft rested on a wild-deer's flank.
When flocked the hinds to Mass from field and farm,
Noting the corn-stacks near the household trees
She wept, for still her heart was with the poor.
"Alas, must all their little humble store
Be prey to fire and sword?"
The twentieth eve
Her travel reached its term. Majestic Loire
By sunset flushed rolled on in massive flood
Solemn though swift. O'er it the countless towers
Of Tours sent forth their tender vesper chimes,
Echoes of vesper chimes in ages past

That smoothed Time's pathway to eternity.
She passed to Chinon's gates; then stood in prayer,
Her wont ere yet she crossed each threshold new;
For thus she mused, perchance some dying man
Lies here; perchance some pretty babe new-born;—
Then entered them unbid.

A music strain
Far heard her guide, she passed from hall to hall,
Some armour-hung, to where rich doors flung wide
Shewed a long gallery thronged by knights and dames.
Some talked, some laughed; at times a lady held
Her finger o'er the chess-board hovering long,
Then dropped it down on castle, queen, or knight,
Yet hesitated still, and marked whose eyes
Pursued the ivory wanderer. At her harp
Sat Agnes Sorel singing. As the song
Soared from her lips the smile around them brightened,
And larger beamed her azure eyes. The maid
Glanced on her lightly, and, misliking, passed
To where, with many near him, stood a youth
In velvet black, with vague, irresolute face
Though delicately shaped. Not distant sat,
Scarce marked, a lady pale that widow seemed;
And yet she was a wife.

The maid addressed him:
"God save thee, gentle Dauphin: may His grace

Accord thee holy life." The prince replied—
News he had heard of her from Baudricourt,
And willed to test her—"Maid, the king is yon!"
He spake, and pointed to a warrior tall
And stately, starred with emblems of his greatness,
Dunois, best soldier deemed that day in France.
She answered: "Gentle Prince, that may not be;
God tells me thou art King and not another."
"Damsel, thy name?"—"Men call me 'Joan the Maid.'
Dauphin, this word I bear thee from thy God,
He yields thee back thy realm! God reigns o'er earth;
In thee He sees the son of countless kings,
His France's rightful heir." Again she spake:
"Dauphin, provide me armour and a horse:
At once the siege of Orleans I must raise,
And later see thee crowned in holy Rheims.
These tasks discharged my mission is fulfilled,
And I, to happy lowliness restored,
Clasp my young sister. This shall be the sign.
Bend low that I may whisper."
Near her lips,
Red rose-leaves by light zephyrs agitated,
He stooped his ear. Her whisper lasted long
As when a young child says his "Ave Mary"
With recollection. Charles' cheek grew pale:

He cried: "Of all who tread the earth not one
Had cognisance of that vow! Maid, I believe!
To Orleans with my standard in thy hand!
At daybreak forth and conquer!"
Those hard by
Clapped hands, obsequious in enthusiasm.
The maid, though unabashed yet troubled, stood
A little bowed with palms upon her breast;
While Agnes Sorel glancing from afar
With sideway forehead leaning on her harp
In tone her royal lover could not hear
Spake splenetic; "Yon girl's foot-bare! Alas!
I fear those rushes hurt her dainty feet!"
Last Citaux's hoary Abbot rose; he spake:
"Sir and my King, at Poitiers three days hence
A Council meets honouring that battle-field
Whereon Charles Martel smote that Moslem host
Else lords ere now of earth! Send there yon maid!
They'll speak the truth as Martel fought for truth;
No ambling half-breeds they!"
The king agreed,
And she, that sad, sweet lady clothed in black
Advancing clasped in hers the maid's slight hands;
Then looking on them said: "No ring; so best!"
Thus adding: "Maid, be guest and friend this night
Of one not rich in friends." But near a casement—

Through it a low wind brushed at times her harp—
Sat Agnes Sorel with sad eyes averse
Fixed on a glittering stream that girt remote
Her little islet home ablaze with flowers,
A place of tombs hard by.
The maid that night
Reposed the first time on a perfumed pillow.
She mused—how mournful seemed that youthful prince,
How angel-like yet childlike that old monk!
Ere long she saw in dream her parents' house
Close by that "fairy tree" beneath whose shade
She oft had danced. A rose o'er-trailed that wall
Painted with warlike deeds a century later.
She trod its floor. The cottage inmates slept;
The old mastiff's self guarding in sleep that cradle
Which had not held its babe for seventeen years
Though still from habit old by it he couched.
She sought the garden; hid in apple-bloom
A bird half wakened chirped. She clomb a rock
And eastward saw among the woody hills
The upper waters of the silver Meuse
Winding relaxed down from the dawn-touched Vosges.
She saw; and sighed to wake.
Three days passed by:
The Council met at Poitiers. In the midst
The maid stood up. Briefly she told her tale.

The Council next made question of her faith:
Her answers pleased it. Insight keen they shewed
Humble albeit, and joined with lofty mind
Strange soberness of heart. Great truths to her,
Thus spake those elders whispering each to each,
Shone through a diamond air: what others saw
She touched with naked hand. They sent to Arc;
Made inquest of her life. The peasants answered
She was the lamb's best friend against the wolf:
The answer of her parents was more brief:—
"The child is good enough."
Thus to the king
The Council judgment sent: "That maid is true:
In her we find no ill but good alone,
Faith, courage, love, pure life and upright heart.
Your Grace instructs us that, untaught by men,
She recognised you when she saw you first
And whispered you that vow divulged to none:
Next you demand, were these things miracles?
Sir, miracles will glorify God's Church
Till flames the last roof on the Judgment Day;
But to distinguish miracles unquestioned
From others fancy-feigned is hard. Your Grace
Fitliest will act trusting at once this maid
And testing her. Let counsellors none approach her:
Loose rein concede her. If her work be God's

'Twill tell its tale. The maid will hide no failure;
She first will make it known."
The king obeyed:
Thus he addressed her: "Maid, thy suit is won:
To Orleans lead ten thousand men—my best—
Since there thou sayest that God will shew a sign."
She answered: "Ere I march I claim three things:
The first is this: the men who share that march
Must be those soldiers who, unhired, through faith
Elect that service paid by God alone.
My next demand is this: that standard old
In the first Crusade winnowed by Syrian airs,
The glory of old Tours. Blazoned thereon
The world's Creator stands 'mid fleurs-de-lys
Down-showering, with a gold sphere in His hand:
That standard I must bear. My last demand—
A sword there lies within Saint Catherine's Church
At Fierbois: record of it none remains:
Yet thrice in vision I have seen that Sword
And on its hilt a gravure. Make it ours:
That sword must go before us on our march."
The king complied. On the third night at twelve
Deep in a vault they found that sword; thereon
That gravure she had named.
Swift as a blast
Of hymns in rapture of thanksgiving borne

O'er lands long parched when rain dissolves the drought,
Rushed the great tidings. Edward the Black Prince
And that fifth Henry, Creçy, and Agincourt
Had done their work; and now an alien babe
Lorded the realm. At last the shout had risen
"Warriors and statesmen failed to shield our France:
A maid shall save her;" and the land believed.
While marched that maid along the bank of Loire
'Mid pastures green new lit with fires of spring
Rejoicing thousands round her flocked. At Blois
She found a mile-long convoy heaped with corn
That lacked an escort. Round old Orleans' walls
The chiefest captains of that age were camped:
Warnings she sent them. Mad with merriment
They flung her missives on the winds: but some
Who laughed not whispered: "Brothers, bide the event!
What God decrees shall come!"
On the third eve
That which their hearts presaged their eyes beheld:
Ten thousand men fronted the setting sun
Alone—the first—that standard in her hand,
The maid! Like men in dream that leaguering host
Divided. Through the lane thus formed sword-girt
She passed—that host—the convoy in their rear:
No sound was heard; no battle-shout, no cry:

Like frozen men they stood. Vainly that hour
Old warriors, frenzied, urged them on. The maid
Through city-gates self-opening as might seem,
Their summits thronged by starvelings pale and mute
Rode to the minster; kneeling there gave thanks
While priests and people sang aloud "Te Deum."
In Orleans there was feast that night. Next day
Their panic past that leaguering host fought hard:
Again the battle-cries of Salisbury rose
Of Talbot and of Suffolk. In a week
Again was silence.
Six thousand lay in death beyond the walls:
The remnant made retreat.
Not unpursued—
The maid and her ten thousand followed fast.
Never was war so strange. That mystic sword
Rapt from the black vaults of St. Catherine's Church
Though borne before her in the battle's van
She wielded never. In her sword-hand flamed
The Oriflamme alone.
She saw a vanquished army's headlong flight
And such a glory lit her brow as when
Miriam sole standing by the Red Sea raised
Her cymbal, singing, "The Lord hath triumphed."
Each battle won, she wept above the slain;
Yet still all humours of the field could charm her:

She heard how Suffolk on the red grass lay
Wounded, and how above him towered Renaud:
"Art thou a knight?" the old warrior made demand:
Renaud replied, "Not yet." Then Suffolk laid
On the young man's shoulder knighthood with his blade
And said, "Your prisoner, Sir." She heard, and cried
"Brave man and true! God grant him speedy ransom!
All good men should be friends!"
Soon all things changed:
Talbot was ta'en, and Scales, whose ancestor
By Norman William rode on Hastings field:
Daily new cities to the maid surrendered.
Once on their march a fortress on a rock
Looked down on her in scorn. D'Alençon's crest
Drooped as he said "Too high for us to attempt!"
She laughed: "If hung the invader in yon clouds
Duke, we must pluck them down!" Ere passed an hour
That fortress fell. The chroniclers report
'Twas not her faith alone which bore her on:
By gift divine the science of the wars
Was hers, infused; its greater laws and less
By inspiration hers: yet all men said
Hers was besides some loftier inspiration.
Later by thirty years thus Dunois witnessed
At that high Council which redressed her wrong:

"Whate'er she wrought, or spake, or looked, in her
A something supernatural still I noted.
She seemed to live in God. The superstitions
At which I laughed in peasant and in prince
In her possessed no place. She spake not oft,
And still her uttered words however great
Seemed less than others which remained unuttered,
Thoughts ever hers, though undivulged, unspoken,
Breed of the same high stock."

Three months went by:
Then to the king she sent. Her words were these:
"Sleep'st thou, my king? Not thus thine ancestors
Slept when their country woke, their country bled!
Sir, Heaven has done its part, and many a land
Looks round amazed: first Orleans saw the sign,
And many an Orleans heart lies cold this day.
Sir, and my king, fulfilled is half my mission;
Share with me the remainder. March to Rheims!"

The king obeyed. Girt by twelve thousand men
She made that marvellous march—two hundred miles—
Whereon each castled crag still frowned upon her
Each city sent a host to bar her way.
At last her mission's bourne, old holy Rheims,
Shone from afar. Ere set of sun it sent
Its best and noblest in procession long
To greet the conqueror with the city's keys.

She and her king made entrance through a gate
High-niched with sculptured saints, by gazers crowned.
The bishop and his clergy round the walls
Led them loud singing. Daily for three days
They sought that city's chiefest sanctuaries
Where Clovis, earliest Christian king of France,
With him three thousand thousand of his iron race,
Led thither by his saintly wife, Clotilde,
The young, the pure, the beautiful, the good,
To Christ was joined in baptism. There, 'tis said,
Saint Remi preached Christ's Passion; there King Clovis
Leaped to his feet and smote the altar steps
Thrice with his sword, and cried, "Had I been there
My Franks and I, those murderers had perished!"
Upon Saint Osmund's Feast the king was crowned:
The Mass completed, through the minster swelled
Sound as of soft seas crushing sandy shores
Though spent the tempest. From the altar next
Timing his feet as though to strains in heaven
Slowly advanced the prelate to the king:
Beside that king, steel-clad from brow to foot
And holding high the standard consecrate
Stood up the Maid Elect. The mitred man
Lodged in the monarch's grasp sceptre and globe,

Chaunting that prayer "Stand firmly and hold fast."
Lastly with sacred balm on breast and brow
He signed the cross, then dropp'd on him the crown
Significant that cross and crown on earth,
Two mysteries are in one.
The Maid Elect
Sank on her knees. She whispered: "From a child
I hated those who stained our France with blood:
Henceforth I hate no more!" She rose and spake:
"Fair king, of kisses on thy hand impressed
In pledge of fealty true the first be mine
Albeit the unworthiest." To whom the king:
"The crown, bestowed aright, had fallen to thee."
She kissed his hand. Like homage paid by all
Once more she rose. She spake with lifted hand
That sceptreless appeared itself a sceptre:
"Most gentle king, attend! Through help of God
Orleans is free once more; the king is crowned.
One duty yet remains. Within this church
I lay this armour worn at God's command:
My parents' home is near; to them I speed;
I yearn to see them and to feel once more
My little sister's heart beating 'gainst mine,
And tend once more our flock."
A rapid glance
The counsel-loving king around him cast,

Then spake: "The coronation feast attends;
We'll treat of this to-morrow." As he spake
On the maid's brow fell shade till then unseen.
That coronation banquet lasted long:
Next morning, ere that weariness and chill
Which follows fierce excitements had dispersed
Dunois approached the maid. "The war without you,"
He said, "will turn to wreck."—"My friend, you err"
She answered. "Yonder sword that led our van,
Yon consecrated standard—both remain;
The king is crowned, henceforth France knows him king;
A year ends all." A bishop rose: "A year?
How many a crime a year of war brings forth!
Maid, to thy prince thy duty is fulfilled;
Maid, to thy France one duty yet remains.
Concede her rest! For this a month suffices."
Others their supplications joined with these—
Prelates, grey statesmen, wounded warriors old.
The king made entrance. "Let the damsel be!
She warned me early—'All shall kiss thy hand;
Mine be the earliest though the unworthiest pledge.'
The first that tendered pledge forsakes me first;
Many will leave me soon."
Pallid she sat
More than her wont, the rest around her standing:

With lips compressed at last she made reply:
"Be it. This second task may meet from God
Acceptance, yet is not of God's command."
An error, yet it added to her crown.
A feastful week the king abode at Rheims
With tournament and dance where brightest eyes
Flashed brighter. Round the monarch nobles flocked
Ice-cold till then. Lorraine's old duke, and Bar,
Damoiseau de Commercy; knights uncounted.
The warfare raged again and triumph still
Followed that royal march it once outran:
King Charles, long pleasure-fooled, fought well when tested.
Leon and Soisson, Provins, Chateau-Treve,
Willing or forced, submitted: later on
Beauvais right gladly, Sens, and St. Denis.
Bedford's great duke, left regent by King Henry,
At Paris crowned his babe. Vainly with all
Consummate soldiership could work, all craft
Of march and countermarch by him alone
Possessed, that regent kept at bay his fate
Till Beaufort joined him with five thousand men.
Charles triumphed; yet the war had suffered change:
Less music in the camp was heard, less prayer
Less mirth. The men who first to Orleans marched
Unbought unbribed their term of service past

Now sweated in their farms. Its inspiration
Had died from off the countenance of the war,
Failed from its inmost heart. Strategic skill
Supplied its place but scantly. Jealousies
Crept from their holes. To stifle such the maid
Renounced command, thenceforth more often seen
In battle's van. But meddlers marred her work
Full often; and a tear was in her eye
When first beside that consecrated standard
Blazoned with Christ alone and fleurs-de-lys
The royal banner flew.

That night a dream
She dreamed—ah, how unlike that Chinon dream!—
The war was past; to Arc she walked alone
With winged feet and bounding heart. High up
Heavy with August sunshine spread the boughs;
The harvest slopes were golden. Near arrived,
Her heart already in her childhood's home,
She clomb a rock which over-gazed the village.
Back she recoiled. There endless winter reigned!
Deep snow hid all. A stranger near her spake:
"Year after year yon desolation lies
Unchanged, the penance of some maid who sinned:
The inmates of that village fled or died."
That stranger passed. The maid — so went her dream—

Rushed from that rock, pushed knee-deep through the snow:
She found her parents' hut half fallen. One hearth
Remained, a cradle near, and mastiff dead—
It had not stiffened yet.
Next day she led
A sally from Compiègne, then leaguered long.
A storm burst forth, and lightning smote the earth.
Blinded she seemed at first then gazed around.
A panic seized her followers, and they fled.
Where then that standard blest, that sacred sword?
She scorned to fly; an arrow pierced her horse.
He fell; the battle tempest o'er her rolled.
She woke, a captive stunned but undismayed.
Some swear 'twas treason's work. Malignant tongues
Had banned her long:—"the praise is still with her,
With us the toil!"
To the end—since shames there are
So wholly shames 'tis shameful to record them.
By laws of war that maid, her ransom paid,
Had walked in freedom. Traitors, that law well knowing
Flung soon around their prey the hunter's net.
Beauvais' false prelate from his see expelled
By popular suffrage for conspiracy
With Bedford—Bedford's creature since that day,
Sworn friend with schismatics more late of Basle,

Devised that plot,—at least 'twas so delivered.
This was their plot: to try the maid for crimes
Not known to courts of war—not civil treason
But sorcery, magic, and such spiritual sins
As meet their doom in spiritual courts alone.
In Rouen sat that court, Beauvais its head;
Beside him fifty doctors, casuists, lawyers,
With others. Cardinal Beaufort was of these,
That prince world-famous for his terrible end
Who saw the murdered Gloster's spectre near
And cried, "Comb down his hair! It stands upright,
Like limed twigs set to catch my winged soul!"[1]
Then passed to judgment.

Midmost in that court
The maid stood daily, friendless, unalarmed;
A wild-eyed throng around her raged for joy
As late with fear; since all that Norman realm
Sworn to Duke William's offspring hated France,
Her most, the maid, yet half believed her mission
Like Powers impure that both believe and tremble.
Unmoved she stood; at times she smiled; at times
Her dark eye rested with a sadness sweet
On brows, some mitred, yet unvenerable,
And wrinkled scribes with hot and hurrying hand
Transmuting truth to lies. Question on question

[1] Shakespeare, *King Henry VI.* Part II. Act iii. Scene 3.

They hurled at her in mass. "Fair sirs," she said
Like one by children's petulance half amused
"I pray you put your questions one by one
Not thus at random." Some one called her "Joan";
She answered, "Gentle lord, men call me 'Maid';
That name I answer best." Yet humbleness
Was ever hers. "Are you in grace?" one cried.
She answered, "If I be, God keep me in it;
If not, may God restore that treasure lost;
Better to die than live not loving God."
Questions doctrinal next they put to snare her.
First gravely, then with sternness she replied,
"Fair sirs, be wise in questioning! Themes there are
On which I answer not and should not answer;
Enough that what I answer shall be truth.
My gentle lords, ye call yourselves my judges:
Ye are such; therefore judge with judgment just
Lest on your heads in turn God's judgments fall."
With dewy eye again she pleaded thus:
"This is *your* trial day! God grant ye stand!
Think of that time when tenderest fingers stroked
Your child-soft hair, and no disordered passions
Made riot in your veins!"

That eve at dusk,
Folk issuing slowly from the Judgment Hall,
Thus Beaufort spake to Beauvais: "Yonder girl

May be impostor; she's no visionary.
Her words though strange have pith; and when she walks
Though light her tread her foot takes hold o' the ground."
Beauvais made answer low: "Lord Cardinal
A king's son you and walk the world unquestioned;
There's not one street in Rouen I could tread
If I released that Maid!" The Cardinal next
With thin lip curled, "The better for Barabbas!"
Abortive thus nine days the judges met.
No witnesses were called or none made answer.
They baited her; 'twas vain. Not once she shewed
Distempered mind. It was not thus with them:
Writhing in wrath at last they shouted thus:
"Full abjuration or the death by fire!"
She answered: "Sirs, deceive not your own hearts:
God reigneth: if the fagots blazed close by
I could not therefore spurn my heavenly mission
Disown those well-loved Voices heard so oft.
Why tempt me, sirs? My loss would nothing serve you.
If I abjured, more late I should confess
'Twas force and fear that made me sin that sin.
Sirs, it was God Who sent me. I appeal
To God, the Pope, and all the Church of Christ."
The judges whispered; next advanced a clerk;
That clerk read low an act of abjuration

Suppressing half that act. She waived it back.
He read her next a brief unmeaning scroll;
It pledged her but to ride thenceforth no more
In war a knight steel-clad. Smiling she took it;
Glanced at it lightly; signed it with a cross;
That cross they placed upon a parchment new,
An abjuration full. The lie thus forged
Lived, a tradition long.
The murder craft
Ended not there. Next morning she awoke
Roused by a sun-flash from her knightly mail
In malice filched from her when captive first,
In malice worse restored. With beating heart
She gazed upon those arms. She mused: "I feared
At first to wear them though at God's command.
How soon that maiden fear was changed to joy
At Orleans when I wore them, then at Rheims
Rheims where I longed to leave them—that is past!
Armour no more I wear in war for ever.
I swore it; I will keep that vow till death.
What then? My task is wrought, my king is king!
This chance equips me for my last high duty:—
Clad in their brightness from my prison cell
I lift my thanks to God! 'Twas He alone
Who nerved me for that task."
Steel panoplied

She knelt where through the casement flashed the dawn,
There sang her last "Te Deum." It was heard
By angel ears.
Not theirs alone—"Relapsed!"
The spies rushed forward crying: "Lo, the woman
Who swore to bear no arms! confessed herself
Impostor and magician." On their leader
She fixed her gaze. "Bishop, by you I die:
Last eve you veiled your purpose; now divulge it.
Your charge is false. I swore last eve to bear
Thenceforth no arms in war: I keep that oath.
I swore my mission was imposture none;
The Voices which imposed it were true voices,
The voices of God's Saints. That oath is true;
I disobeyed those Voices once alone,
Sore tempted then. That sin they have forgiven;
Not two months since they promised me deliverance;
How that may come I know not. Be it so:
Not seeing, I believe.
'Relapsed.' That word bears meaning—'Death by fire!'
Farewell, my lord!"
The man dismissed retired
Incensed, yet glad to go.
That morn by one,
A beauteous English boy—her sword had saved him

In battle's fiercest, and he loved her well—
She sent a message to old Baudricourt,
A message, for she ne'er had learned to write:
"Farewell, true friend! That eve we spake together
You thus addressed me: 'God has given you faith:
Pray God it walk beside you all your life,
Sustain you at your death!'
At that word 'death' a tear was in your eye;
I marked it, and I should have thanked you for it.
I thank you for it now." To those her dearest
Her words were few:—"God's work is worked, thank God!
O what a meeting will be ours in heaven!
Till then rejoice! O father! and O mother!
O sister mine, farewell!"
In the market-place
That synod of the unholy met once more.
Beauvais and Beaufort shouldered through the crowds
That round them pressed—the vulgar least respect
Those priests who fear their censure, court their praise—
The Cardinal spake: "Bishop, those varlets flout you!
Look well before you! When you've burned yon Maid,
The noblest spirit this land has ever bred,
Be sure you drown her ashes in the Seine!
They'll quicken else more late to fiery snakes

And sting your France to death! You, French yourself,
Abhor that Maid for reason I divine not:
I join your hunting-match for England's sake
Remembering those two lands were ever foes:—
With you compared I seem but half a villain."
Beauvais replied not. As the clock struck twelve
They reached the court; the twain together sat.
A summary of the trial duly read,
Beauvais kept silence long. A Norman cried,
"No friend art thou to Henry's babe late crowned
If thou release that Maid!" Beauvais, disguising
True fear in haught demeanour feigned, replied,
"I shall do justice though the heavens should fall."
A clamour rose. Torturing the truth to lies
The false judge spake: "I saw her in her cell;
She watched the hour; she waited some deliverance;
Her fancy heard even then the advancing foe.
Scorning her sacred vow of yestereve
The traitress stood steel-mailed!" Again he sat:
In thunder roared the hall. Death-pale he rose:
"Relapsed! Ye know the sentence—Death by fire."
At morn the Maid, her last confession ended,
Christ's Body had received. Unmoved she stood,
Unmoved as Mary by the Saviour's cross:
Unmoved she heard the preacher's funeral sermon.

Full sorely he descanted on her crimes,
Next on the king's. That second censure moved her.
High as she might she raised her arm—'twas chained—
She spake: "I pray you, sir, 'gainst me alone
Launch your rebuke. If I be an offender
My king has had no part in my offence:
The King of France is he, her Christian King,
And zealous for Christ's Faith." That sermon finished,
Again she spake: "I pray for those who slay me,
I pray for Charles the rightful King of France,
For God's good pardon, and for grace to pass
Gladly to Him; not caitiff-like, nor coward."
That moment from the pyre the flames burst up:
Then first the maid wox white and trembled greatly;
And from the crowd a soldier stept, and brake
A slender staff in twain and made a cross
And placed it in her hand. She kissed that cross
And pressed it to her heart. In agony
She wept, "O any death save death by fire!"
Then noting some who wept—there are who say
That Beauvais' self was of them—shivering she cried
"Pray for me all ye Christian people, pray!"
Then fell from God a wonder. At her word
That multitude, late raging, knelt on the earth
And prayed for her who could no longer pray;
And o'er the Maid there came an answering change:

Raptured she raised her hands; a splendour fell
Full on her face; she seemed to grow in stature;
A winged spirit she looked and not a woman.
Then first she heard the Bridal Song of Heaven;
Heard last those Voices heard so oft of old:
"We promised thee deliverance in two months;
This the deliverance was whereof we spake
Deliverance from the shames and woes of earth;
Deliverance to thy God." The flames rose high;
A sweet and sudden gust blew them towards her:
Aloud she cried, "He makes His angels flames!
Cleanse me, my God! Impostor was I none!
My Voices were true voices; true my mission!
All praise to Him who sent it! Jesus! Jesus!"
Forward she bent her to that flame, and died.

Then horror fell on all; and from those seats
In circle reared where still the judges sat
That hour by thickening smoke-clouds veiled from man
Rang forth a piercing, solitary cry;
"All lost! We've slain a saint! She reigns in Heaven!
Who wrought that sin, on them the doom shall fall."
And wild through Rouen's streets till set of sun
Thousands there ran with hands high tossed, and cried,
"We've slain a saint! Woe, woe for us—for all!"

But all the heart of France from north to south
Like Alpine floods in spring rushed to the Maid

Till, through her praise on earth and prayer on high,
King Charles—her king—reigned o'er his rightful realm.
Her kinsfolk he ennobled, and their name
Changed to "De Lys"; for thus he said, "That Maid
Was more than maid—the Lily sole of France."
A later Pope reversed the sentence vile
By schismatics and traitors passed that day.

THE HIGHER PURGATORY

The primary thoughts embodied in this poem are taken from the celebrated treatise on Purgatory by Saint Catherine of Genoa. Two of them will be recognised by those acquainted with Cardinal Newman's magnificent poem, "The Dream of Gerontius," pp. 330 and 336, edition of 1868. Both are in entire accordance with the teaching of that treatise.

In Genoa by the sea
Saint Catherine sang and thus while o'er the wave
Glittered the star of eve. Whence came her lore?
Not from scholastic parchments, texts obscure,
But creeds of Holy Church felt in their depths,
And from that reflex cast on saintly minds
Down from the mirror of the Mind supreme
When God sends gifts to man.
What land is that—
That land majestic, mystic, wondrous, blest,
Yet heart-subduing too, and soul-o'erawing
Where passion riots not, where love earth-soiled
Divinely blighted, withering to the root,
Leaves room for heavenly love? What land is that

Where earthly mists obscure not Truths eterne,
Thenceforth but seen like ghosts of fair shapes dead
Or souls in limbo pent? What land is that
Whose piercing airs from God's own mountain launched
Cancel disease, reclothes the leper's bones—
If spiritual things may thus in types be shadowed—
As though with infant's flesh; takes from our nature
Its downward leaning, girds it as with wings
Of heavenward aspiration? 'Tis not earth!
Before earth's sons have reached that hallowed site
Her probatory state is past for ever.
They that fought bravely from their labours rest
And bathe in healing wells. The songs of heaven
Reach them: the All-Blessèd Vision is not theirs—
It will be theirs! That thirst for God unsated
Which from the human severs meaner kinds,
Chief prophecy of man's predestined greatness,
Survives, their sorrow sole. If lesser griefs
Be theirs, they heed not such.
What clime is that
Still as the Church's Holy Saturday
Sabbath twice hallowed of God's New Creation
His second, by endurance wrought not act—
That Saturday when now the Week of Woes
Behind us lies, Christ's obsequies complete—
That Sabbath both of rest and expectation

When now once more the lights are lit, the cross
Unveiled, the "Gloria in Excelsis" sung,
When sleeps the Saviour in the tomb close sealed,
When they who love Him share His sacred rest
Low bent and listening while the vesper psalms
Now rise, now sink, like waves that hide, then shew
Some ever-setting sun? Deepest that rest
Men knows on earth; yet deeper theirs the Souls
That breathe that cleansing clime. They sinned on earth;
They sin no more. In them that buried sin
Severed from circumstance of time and place
Sleeps like a sheathèd sword. Their will with God's
At last—now first—is one. Such unity
Alone could breed such rest.
What Grief is that
Which, teaching man his primal greatness, shames
His joy foregone in pleasures wed to dust?
Such joy man knew not first. The sire of men
'Mid flowers of Eden walked without a smile:
The gladness of all kinds that round him ranged
Seemed though a beauteous yet an alien thing.
God saw, and gave that man for male an equal
Made in God's image. That was Love's first grade.
Later, God walked Himself upon the earth,
The God-Man, the Redeemer, Lord and Friend.

Thenceforth man's love attained its second grade;
Thenceforth, if bound to earth alone, had seemed
Madness, not love. Life veils from us Love's greatness:
Life veils not less the greatness of high Grief:
We are but trivial lovers all our life—
We are but trivial mourners. Thanks to God,
Who grants us at life's close one sovereign Love,
One Grief, the cure for all.
See and discern!
"I said that ye are gods." Through sin alone
Was added: "Ye shall die as beasts that perish."
Each Soul at its creation is all pure;
For that cause, issuing from beneath God's hand,
In one transcendent flash it sees God's Face.
'Tis gone—that flash! That Soul, in body bound,
Sees it no more. That moment did its work!
That moment launched abroad o'er every soul
Like flight of wild swans o'er a dark lake's mirror
Those spirit-cravings which are Spirit's self,
Those wing'd Ideas which are Reason's essence,
Conscience's inspiration. What are these?
The great Ideas of the Good, the True,
The Fair, the Just, the Pure, the Infinite,—
These are the irradiation of man's being;
These light with hope the cradles and the graves:
Where'er there's greatness here on earth its source

Was that brief flash! It hurled God's warrior forth
To battle with the monsters of man's life;
Gave souls their "Militant State," and—victory won—
Their thrones upon God's throne!
One other moment
Like that there is—but one! 'Tis when the Soul,
Its militant state surceased, stands up, death past,
Ah pure no more, before Christ's judgment seat.
Christ's countenance that hour—for infinite
That hour the depths of its compassionateness—
Reveals the award—a pardon and a penance:
The past is judged and dies; the soul, self-seeing,
Through no compulsion, sadly yet in hope,
Flees to the cleansing realm. There Suffering nigh
Greater than Action seals its holy work
Since there God acts alone. That suffering soul
Rejoices in its pain. Had choice been given
To leave that realm, its healing incomplete,
Before high Justice had its uttermost farthing,
Before God's Will was utterly fulfilled,
That soul had cried, "Not so!" Two moments these:—
The earliest stamps on man his Maker's image,
The last renews that image dimmed by sin,
Makes penance sorrow's balm.
What means that penance?
A Sorrow nobler than earth's noblest Joy!—

Sorrow of souls supremely loving God
That see not God. On earth we see the earth;
In Heaven the Saints see God. In Purgatory
The Souls behold Him not. Near them He is—
Nearer perchance than once were soul and body:
Such nearness unto souls that see not God
Is sorrow—sorrow's sharpest. Could a mother
Hearing for years the small feet of her child
Pattering along some upper chamber's floor
Content her with the sound?—a child rejoice
Who, seeing all beside, saw not her mother
Yet heard her voice well known?
If any ask
How with such suffering solace can consist?
The Master answers: Who are blest on earth?
The great, the rich, the strong? Not such, but those
Who, stormed against by Fortune and by Fate,
Racked by disease, worn out by long frustrations,
Not less can hear Christ's whisper in their hearts,
"Blessed the mourners." That Beatitude
Is throned in Purgatory. "O felix culpa!"
Man fell; but Love divine outran that fall
With Restoration! Not a second Eden,
Not endless spring and never-fading flowers;
Not gambols of those playmates lion and lamb;—
Not these; but earth redeemed and promised heaven

Man's Vision of his God. Without that Vision
The heaven of heavens were but a vulgar joy
Needing perchance no previous Purgatory.
The discipline of earthly pain suffices
To unfilm pure eyes to mysteries of Grace
Withheld from worldly sight. Austerer pain
Unfilms them to the mysteries of Glory;
Not servile pain, not selfish; greater pain
Born of a greater love. Thus taught, man learns
That lesson all too high for Souls flesh-bound,
The creature was not for the creature made
But for the sole Creator; for that cause
Longs for his Maker as the blind for light,
Pants for Him as the hart for water-springs,
Rushes to God as rivers to the sea
Life's hindrance once removed. Hail, holy Death!
We glimpse God's light through crevices and chinks,
Till thy strong mace shatters our earthly prison;
Then from the dead face dawns that smile of death
Which mutely thanks its God!
Hail, Holy Souls!
Calm as that smile are ye, as mute, as bright!
Ye know that God is near. That sacred presence
Grows stronger than your consciousness of self:
Self, weakening, murmurs but "Thy will be done"
Dying, is glad to die. O precious pains

How unlike pains of earth!—ambitions wrecked
Suspicions, fears, remorse without repentance.
O pains, how unlike those of reprobate Spirits!
Who, bound by fiat of a will all hate,
To proffered grace extend a hand close clasped
In death and after death! The Holy Souls
Fast rooted in God's love hate sin alone.
Sin's chain is burst; sin's stain awhile remains.
Not life with all its medicinal woes,
Not Death that o'er the dying rolls at once
Lethe and Eunoe,[1] could cleanse that stain.
But more than life or death is God's compassion:
It shaped for man—perhaps ere yet that fruit
Fatal was plucked—a sphere purer than earth
Whose fire is fire of light. O Spirits blind!
Why gaze but on that planet's shadowy side!
Its bright side sees the sun.
Hail, saintly realm!
Those seeds of greatness in the human soul
Sown when, created first, it saw God's Face,
Re-sown when it beheld its great Redeemer's,
Mature themselves in your inspiring clime,
Energies, instincts, spiritual faculties
Proportioned to that spiritual universe
Man's destined heritage, and greater far

[1] See Dante's *Purgatorio*, canto xxxiii.

Than all God's visible worlds—"My portion *Thou*."
O noble, travailing soul! that generatest
A greater soul, and heavenlier than thyself,—
A greater, yet in part the same—rejoice!
The worm one day shall soar!
All praise to Him
Who made the Militant State, so brave, so fair;
It takes us far upon the heavenward road:
All praise to Him who made the Suffering State;
It lays us down before the gate of Heaven.
The first waged war on things external half,
The last on that interior foe—Self-Love,
Specious Self-Love, that "subtlest beast of the field,"
That Serpent old which round man's inmost being
Winds itself, fold on fold. A touch all fire
Unrings it: to its victim's feet it falls.
Self-love extinct, true love stands up delivered:
The twinned Commandments crowned resume their sway
The second in sublime subordination:
Man's eyes are opened; man beholds his God.
O sons of earth, if this be Purgatory,
What thing is Heaven itself?

HYMN FROM ST. GERTRUDE

O GOD, my God! a slender voice from earth
Were weak to sing Thee. May Thy fair, strong Sons,
Thronging through heaven, Thine Angels and Thy Saints
The Hierarchies of Thy Predestinate,
In triumph hymn Thee: may their song be mine!

Those Spirits Seven that stand before Thy throne,
And they the fervid hosts Thou sendest forth
Like light o'er all the earth to minister
Thy gifts and graces to the Race Redeemed,
Let them sing loud and let their song be mine.

The Four and Twenty Elders that adore Thee;
The Patriarchs, and the Prophets, they that cast
Their crowns for ever down before Thy throne;
The Living Creatures Four shadowed with wings
That from Thy praises cease not day or night,
Let them sing loud and let their song be mine.

That worshipful and Apostolic Band
High Puissances of Love, that with the might
Of their wide arms in intercession raised
Sustain—for such Thy Will—Thy sacred Church
That crests with towers the many-mountained earth
While the vain storm of ages round it roars,
Let them sing loud and let their song be mine.

The armies of Thy Martyrs, they whose robes
Are purple ever with Thy Blood, not theirs,
Which makes, through them, all Earth a Calvary,
Let them sing loud and let their song be mine.

The shining Senate of Thy Confessors
In blest translation from this world of sin
Lifted by Thee henceforth Thy peace to share
And reign with Thee in never waning light,
Let them sing loud and let their song be mine.

Thy Virgin Choir serenely clothed upon
With the snows of incorruption, they whose brows
Flash far the splendours of Thy Sanctity;
Who, up the hills of God ascending ever,
Where'er He goeth follow still the Lamb,
From their glad hearts resounding that new Song
"Jesus, Thou Spouse of Virgin souls, all hail!"
Let them sing loud and let their song be mine.

May Thine Elect, whom none can know or number
Thy people from all nations give Thee praise;
Thou art their God and there is none beside:
May all Thy marvellous works in Heaven and Earth
That jubilee re-echo: may Thy Church
And she, that World material, sisters twain,
Sustain the eternal psalm antiphonal
Burn in one joy, and send Thee back a gleam
Reflex of that high glory increate
Whereof both flood and torrent fount art Thou.

HYMN OF PRAISE TO GOD

(THE THOUGHTS FROM ST. GERTRUDE)

HEIGHT inaccessible of Sovran Power;
Unfathomed depth of Wisdom hid and sealed;
Limitless breadth of all-embracing Love;
None but Thyself can yield Thee worthy praise:
Thyself alone canst know Thyself. Our Hymns
Are as a little breeze that dies. O then
May Thine eternal Godhead yield Thee praise:
Thy Majesty enthroned and measureless
May It upon the altar of Itself
Offer the unceasing incense. May the expanse
Of Thy far Wisdom round Creation's shores
Murmur Thy praise. Thy Justice and Thy Might
And all Thine Attributes unknown or known
Like heavenly armies may they chaunt Thy Name,
They most Thy piercing Sweetness and the voice
Wounding, yet healing, of Thy tender Love!

May all the Names that name Thee, may the might
Of all Thy Titles radiant o'er the gates
Of that Jerusalem Thy regal seat,
Which are as banners blazoning Thee to man;
May those mute Types, revealed or latent yet
In the depths of thought, which like to keys unlock
The secret chambers of Thy Mysteries,
Bless Thee for ever, give Thee thanks for me,
Exult in Thee, adore Thee, chaunt the praise
Of each of Thy Compassions in old time
Vouchsafed, or now, or in the years to come,
Vouchsafed to me Thy least, or him the greatest
Whoe'er he be, of all Thy heavenly Hosts.

May the adored Humanity of Christ
Praise Thee, my God, for me. May every Act
And Suffering of His Converse here on earth
Yield Thee a separate incense. Be they thine
His divine Virtue and the all-wondrous Grace
That passed miraculous from Him. May His tears
And those Five Fountains of His Blood all pure,
Drown my transgressions; may His precious Death
My lack supply and glorify Thy Name.

May that serenest Queen and crowned Creature
That in the full assembly of Thy Saints

Through her humility is highest throned
And nearest to her Son, Mary thrice-blest,
May she, O Thou Creator of all worlds,
For me extol Thee; may the heavenly choirs
Ten thousand times ten thousand, blissful Souls,
And singing Spirits, hymn Thee. Not alone
Standeth the great Priest in the light eterne:
His own are with Him; what He doth they do;
And as the Shadow with the Substance moves
They also lift their hands and chaunt Thy praise.

May our most holy Mother in all lands
The Universal Church exult in Thee,
Praise Thee for me, and sing to thee. May they
Her Daughters Seven, the all-quickening Sacraments,
Her dread yet gentle Rites with touch air-soft,
Her reverend and decorous Ceremonies,
Her Penances, her Vigils, and her prayers,
Her Psalms re-echoed far from peak or isle
Or Minster city-girt, while reigns the sun
At noon, or sink the stars beneath the sea;
May all her Sanctities and holy Woes
Praise Thee, and all her Raptures, their reward,
The still processions of her kingly Thoughts,
The angel-like ascent of Hopes and Vows,

Her sacred Longings, her divine Desires,
And each low sigh breathed from this vale of tears.

May all Thy gifts of Grace on me bestowed
Though I be dumb, confess thee. May that Love
Which from Eternity its pitying eyes
Reposed on me a spot amid the void
And forth from darkness called me; may the hands
Of that strong Providence which shaped my way
Praise Thee. May all my being, all I have
Or am, self-known, or self-unknown, to Thee
Well known, my Maker, sing Thy laud. May all
My Faculties of Body, Mind, and Soul,
My nerves and veins, my sinews and my bones,
With Thee through labours or high suffering knit,
Praise Thee; they too, my Memory and my Will,
My Heart with all its groanings, and my Life
Warring to death on Sin which is Thy foe.

HYMN ON THE DIVINE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

(THE THOUGHTS FROM ST. GERTRUDE)

JESUS, Thou Son of God, true God, true Man!
May one voice more, a feeble voice from earth,
Blend with the choirs that Mystery who sing
Highest, that thrilling Influx unrevealed
Of Thy Divinity, which, like a tide
From ocean winding up an inland stream,
Creeps on through Thy Humanity for aye;
Creeps on through that Humanity enthroned
In heaven, transfigured 'mid the eternal light,
High guerdon for the Wounds that yet It bears
Deep-graved; the Wounds that wrought man's peace below.

Jesus, Thou Son of God, true God, true Man!
A voice from earth would join the choirs that sing
That breathless, ravishing, supreme delight,

Springtide of bloom for aye renewed, wherein
The sacred Eyes of Thy Humanity,
That close not, in their venerable trance
Feast on their golden pasture limitless;
The Vision of the Eternal Three in One.

Jesus, Thou Son of God, true God, true Man!
A voice from earth would join the choirs that sing
That quietude and solace high wherein
The sacred Ears of Thy Humanity,
Fruition evermore renewed, are held
Not by the lute or viol wind or cord
But by those dread interior Harmonies
For ever whispering round the abyss of God,
Prime Hymeneal and perpetual psalm—
The Concords of the Eternal Three in One.

Jesus, Thou Son of God, true God, true Man!
A voice from earth would join the choirs that sing
The sweet refreshment of Thy heavenly Rest;
That clear, sabbatical, and mystic clime
Whereby Thy deified Humanity,
Its suffering past, is equably embraced,
The embowering sunset of its endless peace,
And that vivific fragrance evermore

Breathed from that underlying Eden vast
The Bosom of the Eternal Trinity.

Jesus, Thou Son of God, true God, true Man!
Humanity with Godhead crowned, all hail;
In Thy Sufficiencies impassable;
With spiritual senses clothed; to earthly pain
Superior, or the attempt of earthly joys!
In place of these one kingly bliss is Thine,
Simple, inviolate, indivisible,
The inflowing of Divinity for aye
Permeant through Thy Humanity as when
All heaven distils itself through dewy woods.
Hail, Son of God, and Mary's Child! Through Thee
Within her luminous Bridal Chamber still
Humanity with God for ever holds
Commerce transcendent. Hail, for ever hail,
Christ, God and Man, that makest all things one!

THE TRUE HUMANITY

FROM ST. GERTRUDE

SACRED Humanity of Christ, all hail!
Glorified Manhood Who alone art Man;
Great Archetype in God's own image formed
From everlasting. Adam was to Thee
Second, not first. Essential Man art Thou;
We are but pigmy and distorted shades
Downcast from Adam's lightning-blasted trunk
Upon the blighted heath of mortal life,
Or timeless and abortive fruit unblest
Cumbering his boughs. True God, alone true Man!
Thou from Whose touch deific streams that power
Which keeps from further and more bestial lapse
The race created Human; hail, O hail!
Hail in Thy Paradise of lonely light
Walking with God; in Thy Regalities
The Mediatorial Realm from pole to pole

Swaying: all hail, great Pontiff, with Thyself
Lighting Thy Church: all hail, Prophetic Power
God's Wisdom prime, His Uncreated Word,
Before Whose eyes Creation yet unborn
In vision passed; and from Whose tongue her Works
Their Names received, and were what they were called.

COLUMBUS, AND THE SEA-PORTENT

FIERCELIER eight days the tempest roared and raved:
Feeblier each day that God-protected bark
Shuddering in every plank, and panting, clomb
The mountain waves or sank to vales betwixt them:
Meantime the great Sea-Wanderer lay nigh death
In agonies unnamed: old wounds once more
Bled fast at every joint. At times his head
He raised to learn if stood the masts or fell;
Then on his pallet sank with hands hard clasped,
Silent. Full oft the mariners o'erspent
Approached him clamouring "Master, give it o'er!
Drift we before the storm to loved Castile!"
Such suppliants still Columbus answered thus
In words unchanged: "Good news were that for Powers
Accursed, who clutch dominion long usurped
Lording God's Western world! They hate the Cross
And know that when it lands their realm dissolves.

Theirs is this tempest; and therein they ride!"
The eighth eve had come. While hard the sunset strove
To pierce the on-racing clouds, a cry rang out
Re-echoed from those caravels three hard by,—
The cry of men death-doomed. Columbus rose:
Saint Francis' habit and Saint Francis' cord
Girt him, for on the seas—at times on land—
His great heart joyed to wear that Patriarch's garb
Within whose sacred convent-homes full oft
When sick he lay with earthly hope deferred,
Hope heavenly rose renewed. The kings had mocked,
The monks sustained him. Hail, Rabida, hail!
Thy cloisters he had paced; thy pathways hard
Yet sweet with lavender and thyme; had gazed
On the azure waves from Palos' promontory;
Listened its meek Superior's words: "Fear naught!
Beyond that beaming ocean lies *thy* world!
Thou seek'st that world for God's sake, not for man's;
Therefore God grants it thee." Next morn he sailed:
That holy monk his great Viaticum
Gave him while yet 'twas dark.
He heard that cry:—
Like warrior-Pontiff or like Prophet old
Treading the leanest of grey Carmel's crags
Such seemed he, steadying with drawn sword his steps.

The sailors round him crouched. Whence came their
terror?
That Spectre Demon of "The gloomy sea"
Till then by Europe's mariners never kenned
Was circling t'ward them. Evermore in gyres
Nearer it reeled departing to return.
They who in later years beheld that shape
Gave it this name, "The Typhon of the waves"
Sole name that yet it bears on eastern seas.
Tower-like its columned stem ascends up-drawing
To heaven huge ocean wastes, a tree of death
Whose crest far-spread blackens the waves like night:
The spell dissolves; it breaks; it falls. The ship
Beneath—whole navies were they linked in one—
Thenceforth is seen no more.
Columbus stood:
Alone of those who gazed he felt no fear:
Like Lucifer ere fallen that Portent flashed;
Like Lucifer, a rebel judged, it gloomed:
Calmly the Man of God gazed on. He knew
That Spirits of bale and Nature's Powers alike
Bow to God's Will. The man but late had read
The Gospel of St. John. He raised the tome:
His sword pressed down the page. He read, not loud—
And yet with voice that pierced that raging storm:
"In the beginning was the Word; with God

For evermore He dwelt: He made the worlds.
And lo! the Word of God assumed Man's Flesh."
He ceased; anon he spake: "Whate'er thou art,
Or Spirit or Body or both, hear and obey!
My Christ is God: He wears Man's Flesh in heaven:
We sail to plant Christ's Cross on Pagan shores:
By this, His Sign, I bid thee hence! Depart!"
Then with his sword the Christian Sign he signed
High in the air; and on the deck beneath
Slowly a circle traced. Again he spake:
"As stand the Hills around Jerusalem
So round His People stands the Lord their God;
The kingdom of the Impure is cut in twain!"
And straight the advancing Portent, thus adjured,
Swerved from his course and curving t'ward the North,
Vanished in cloud.

Once more a cry was heard—
Cry of those Spirits dethroned—a keener note
Than wail of human woe. In distance lost
It died. Then slowly from the North on rolled
The gathered bulk of ocean in one wave
An onward-moving mountain smooth as huge,
And lifted by that wave, lifted not whelmed,
Those worn-out mariners saw again that sun
But lately set. Sobbing the tempest ceased:
Prone lay the ocean like that sea of glass

Mingled with fire that spreads before God's throne :
And the glory of the Lord was on that wave.
Painless that night the Apostolic Man
Slumbered ; upon his breast the scroll of him
Whose head had rested on the Master's breast.
In sleep fair visions soothed him ; western Isles
Innumerable, thick-set with temples vast
That hurled their worship to the God Triune ;
And, eastward far, his boyhood's hope fulfilled,
Christ's Sepulchre redeemed from Moslem thrall ;
Pale Christians from their dungeons issuing free ;
And Christian standards crowning Salem's towers.

COLUMBUS AT SEVILLE

A.D. 1504

ARGUMENT

Not long before his death Columbus receives the news of Queen Isabella's, learning at the same time that greater cruelties than those he had recently witnessed in the Indies had since then been inflicted on the native race—cruelties which had daily increased during the five years since he had been deprived of his viceregal authority.

THE Queen is dead: four days the huge round earth
Has been one tomb. To Spain her death is judgment;
To the Indies—to the total West—'tis ruin!
Long since and oft by mandates signed and sealed
She swore to all who bore her high commission
"The Indians shall be free men." They are slaves:
She sped me from her death-bed tidings of them;
They reached me with the tidings of her death:
An Indian Queen, their noblest, Anacaona,
Friendliest to us till racked by Spanish crimes,
Was snared but late, then slain—her chiefs made slaves!

Ovando, he that fills my seat, had done it.
Made slaves! But three months since I saw their slaves!
Then first I fully learned what slavery means
When demons are the masters.
Slaves! Dare I call them slaves? In ancient times
Slavery at least had pretext. Lawless tribes
Reduced, revolters quelled in honest war
Were slaves, though often kindly used. This hour
What means that term? It means man's meekest race
Scourged to their river-brims and groping there
Foodless all day with bleeding hands and eyes
Blind from the glittering wave—groping for gold.
It means the prince deposed; the children orphaned;
It means the fugitive youth by bloodhounds chased;
It means whole tribes in council met and there
Each man self-slain. Twelve years ago—no more—
I leaped on that new shore and blessed its Maker!
Even then a doubt fell on me. Since that day
How many a beauteous isle has mourned our landing!
Ere three years passed they left their herds, their flocks,
Starved 'mid their forests. Sins till then unknown
Our teaching, our bequest, wrought death on others—
We Christians did that work. The race will vanish:
The vengeance—that remaineth!
From the first
They loved us; fain had worship'd us; drew near

With widening wondering eyes: they brought the kid
The lamb, the laden branch. I cried, "These looks
Could plead not vainly with the flintiest heart;
That boon they seek is Christ." On nearer knowledge
I found them chaste and honest, yea devout
Though to false gods. They neither stole nor lied.
That morn I sailed from Spain a monk addressed me
My host at old Rabida's cloistral home,
My friend who oft had cheered me with his smile
On Palos' chestnut-shaded steep far seen;
"Fair are thine omens, Christopher Columbus!
Saint Christopher was that giant who, staff-propt
Bore on bent neck that Babe across the strait:
Thou bear'st him o'er a stormier sea. Columba!
A Dove it was wafted that olive spray:
Thou bearest God's Fruit of Life!" Ah me, ah me!
I bore the Cross, not Creed!
Whose sin was that?
Theirs who stretched forth their hands at once to Christ
Clamouring for baptism premature, or ours
Who preaching Christ in word in act denied Him?
To the loveliest of the isles we gave great names,
We christened them "Conception," "Santa Cruz"—
These things we did—and one beside—we made
Christ's Faith, thus honoured, unbelievable.

How oft that time I made confession thus,
"'Twas not from compass, measured sphere, old books
I won my faith in that far western world:
Rebuffs, betrayals soon had quenched such faith:—
Mine was an Inspiration from above!"
With what a smile quivering on tortured lips
The Indian might reiterate my words,
"An Inspiration!"
Could I have foreseen
How strictly I had fenced those Indian tribes!
The men who shared with me my earliest voyage
Were men devout who loved the Indians well:
To these I gave waste lands: the native race
Served them for hire—a league of mutual good
As then I hoped. Ere long I sailed to Spain:
The wonders of that West were noised abroad,
Its gold, its gems. Then darkened God's fair heaven;
Yea, where the carcase lay, the eagles flocked,
Prodigals disgraced, adventurers without honour
Rushed o'er the waves. They bought new lands for nought;
Headlong they hurled the natives on the mines—
I knew not yet the worst.
'Twas thirst for gold!
It spread like plague from spotted face to face:
I saw the human semblance rot beneath it.

The Monks denounced slave-holders day and night;
They stood betwixt the living and the dead
With arms far stretched. The Queen, the King, the Laws
Frowned on the sin. What made their protests null?
What makes a mockery of them to this hour?
A knot of merchants vile by distance screened;
Bribed governors, trencher-priests the Gospel's shame
Who by the lawyer's plea, the sophist's quirk
Cancel Christ's Creed. Through these the Saviour bleeds
Before the New World's gates.
Spain shared that crime!
She lacked the simple aim, the "single eye":
Her statesmen wished the Indians well, but willed
Save Ximenes, far more that Spain should stand
Full-mirrored in her every attribute
Alcaldes, Procurados, Alguazils
Where'er her sceptre ruled—
Spain should have sent the West but missionaries;
The rest had followed later as elsewhere,
Arts, manners, laws. Right gladly these had sailed:
Gladly on landing burned their ships and laboured.
Great hearts! 'twas they that Christianised the lands
God and their own right hand their inspiration,
Not statesmen and not kings—
They would have left their martyrs; won the Pagans.
The omitted duty to committed sin

Strode with a giant's strides.
Weighed and found wanting!
Not Spain alone; a world whose boast was Christ
Had set enthroned for ages. Then from heaven
God's strong right hand let down God's golden scales:
This was the test. "From age to age," He said,
"I gave to thee My Kingdom and My Truth
And made thee wondrous in the Gentiles' eyes:
That done I lifted up the veil, and shewed thee
A stone-blind people wandering in deep night:
I bade thee lay thy hand in benediction
Down on that people's head. Thou stretch'dst it forth;—
Then centuries of thy sins prevailed against thee:
That people knelt:—it rose to Leper changed
And vanished in the darkness."

In old days
I wept for others; never for myself:
That time is past and gone. Weep for me, Earth!
And thou wide Heaven compassionate my woe!
Yea all who love the right! The Queen is dead:
The Truth looks on me from those great dead eyes—
Who lives that ne'er at one unhappy hour
Warred on the sacred tenor of a life?
I was the Indian's friend; and well they knew it;
Yet once—but once—walking by earthly lights

Swerved from the perfect way.
That Thought it is
Which venoms Memory's wound. That Thought recurred
Oftenest when Hope was brightest; thrice it frowned
A phantom o'er my sick-bed pointing West:
There hung it all that night when died the Queen,
And said "Remember!" When have I forgotten?

Intrigues of State had kept me long in Spain:
Westward returned I found an Indian race
In mad revolt against us and subdued them.
Then came worse trial. Roldan's mutiny raged
The wiliest of that wily Spanish race:
That man had dowered his crew with lands slave-worked;
Desperate that crew; my friends but few nor trusty.
He beckoned to the Indian race; it rose—
Such fratricidal war, thus complicated,
Could only end in universal slaughter
And that New World abandoned, and abhorred.
The few I still could trust whispered "Beware!"
Then only in my life I temporised:
I sealed those cessions made to Roldan's friends:
To balance these on true men I conferred
Lands of revolted natives changed to slaves
Rebels not pardoned. Never had I designed

That bondage should be final. Laws of mine
In time had raised them first to serfs then freemen.
To the King I wrote, "They dragged from me these terms:
Or cancel or confirm them." He confirmed them:
That royal confirmation I confirm not
Nor condemnation shun from righteous men
Rightly informed. Las Casas disapproved:
The Queen reproved me. This too well I know
My sorry instruments oft outstripped my orders:
What if worse miscreants falsified my letters?
At best I erred: how much one day will tell.
At first my star appeared to reach its zenith;
I trusted not that promise; from that hour
I trusted none—nor others, nor myself.
Roldan renewed his plots; traitors their treasons;
False tidings reached the King: he plucked me down:
I never bore since then the staff viceregal:
Five years were passed in shipwrecks, frauds and wrongs:
The platform laid by me had never trial:
The rebel and the just alike were slaved.
But once again I trod that Isle. Misrule
Had changed it to a Hell.
Not less that day
Will come when Nations shall resound my praise!
When? When the years have proved my work frustration!

I trample on such glories. In my youth
My least ambition was to find those Indies;
My chief was this:—to lead a Christian host
Its cost defrayed by new-discovered worlds,
Myself to Palestine or serve content
Among its meanest ranks. Ferdinand knew all:—
I promised him new realms and named my terms:
Both swore: I kept my vow. He filched my guerdon
Like huckstering churl; left me a bankrupt hand
To launch a new crusade upon the East.
Spain with his fraud connived. The worse for her!
That gold she ravished from the Indian streams
Will pamper first her vices, after that
Famish her honest industry, then leave her
Stripp'd bare a beggar in the winter sun.
Europe that shared the guilt will share the penance
Surfeit without, but leanness in the soul;
Devoutest deeds, delight of harpers old,
Will kindle hearts no more: earlier crusades
That day be noted but for blots that blurred them
Like dark spots on the sun—
Loyalty next will perish: Liberty
Kneel to the despot throned on money-bags
Like England's Henry of that name the Seventh;
False Nobles traffic make of Faith and Honour
Propping with Church-lands desecrated homes;

Religion last will lose its hold of hearts;
Brambles usurp her shrines; her chalice gemmed
Brighten the feaster's board. Sin's fire this day
Pastures, a glutton, on the fair green tree;
Say, will it spare the dry? I see in the germ
The woe full-grown. Behold my gifts to man!
I will'd to find new worlds: I marred the old:
To spread Christ's Realm: I fouled it with disgrace;
My greater task remains a dream abortive:
My work consummate proves a monster birth—
The knave who spurned me back to Spain in chains
Was Prophet and inspired!

For four long nights
I never closed my eyes. What strains are these?
What dew celestial weighs my eyelids down?
I shall awake renewed or die in slumber.

[*He falls asleep.*]

Thank God! That slumber saved me. When it fell
The noontide scorched me; now the sun is setting:
In sleep I heard angelic choirs: they sang
"The Woe is past!" Hark! now a different strain!
Those mild Franciscans chaunt their vesper psalms;
How like those psalms they sang at dear Rabida!
I smell its thymy height! Thank Heaven, they first

Sang Mass on Indian shores!
The fever's gone!
O'er all my spirit steals a gradual light
Like that pure day-dawn, waited long, that crept
At last o'er waveless waters as we lay
Close-anchored by that Indian Isle first kenned
San Salvador.
Ah me, again that wail!
Four days I heard it as the sun descended
While from yon Minster's cave-like portals streamed
That crowd black-stoled crying "The Queen is dead."
I can outface it now. She is not dead!
'Twere blasphemy to say "The Queen is dead":
That were to say that Virtue's self can die.
Of all her Virtues Love was still the root:
Others need many virtues; she but one;
Through Love her Faith believed; her Hope upsoared;
Through Love she saw in everything God's Image
Not knowing that round her lived that clime which drives
Base things to dens and holes. She is not dead!
O great and holy creature, sweet and brave,
By nature great, sun-clad by more than nature,
So spirit-free and yet so bound by duty,
So queenly yet so humble—
O type of faithfulness in word and deed,
O Flower of all perfections known on earth,

O pledge of those that bloom alone in heaven
That heaven her presence makes more heavenly still—
She is not dead: now first she lives.

All hail
Thou day of days when I beheld her first!
'Twas at Granada's siege. Spain's leaguering force
Had nobly done its part: yet long fatigues
Had marred its martial beauty. A shout was heard:
On steed snow-white she rode into the war:
At once the battle brightened in her beam:
At once a spirit of life rushed forth through all things:
That plain between the city and the snows
Glistened ere long, a tilting ground whereon
Dusk Arab chiefs with nobles and with knights
Fresh from their towers in Aragon and Castille
Encountered daily 'neath their ladies' eyes:
The Queen's white crest was ever 'mid the foremost!
There I beheld her when the Silver Cross
Made way before her through Granada's gates.
My breast swelled larger for the wounds it bore.
Come what come may that war was a Crusade!

O God, how dire a storm has raged around me!
How strange this respite! What if half those storms
That wreck us be but storms ourselves have raised

Like that the racer breasts ere falls his steed
Dead on the plain? Yet fiercer storm there is
Sent us by God, Himself the eternal Stillness,
And sent in love. In that supreme of trials
When earth beneath us heaves and in our soul
Huge gulfs, so seems it, open that presage
Not death, not death—but worse—Annihilation,
Even then our peace is nigh. That storm's Illusion!
It is a Spirit that rushes at that hour
Through air unmoved! We, clinging to his skirts,
Mistake for Storm that Spirit's onward flight:
And cling the closest when that flight is fleetest:
Then most the Soul makes way. Teach us, great God,
Thou that so firmly knittest us with our kind,
That in the storm of centuries not less
Man's total Race makes progress like the Man
They most perchance the Races trampled most,
Progress through agonies from nought to Thee.
There hangs the Crucifix! 'Twas Suffering's worst;
Thenceforth 'tis Sorrow's sole of Comforters:
There's meaning there: this means it, that in Pain
Subsists some Power Divine.
O Suffering Race
Through Him ye know not and the world less knows,
They least who boast His Name but mock His Law,
Thy Suffering must be somehow joined with His,

Must draw from His some grace expiatory,
Must make for all Earth's Sufferers intercession
Crying beneath God's altar "Lord, how long?"
That lore we should have taught thee teach to us
Then when thy crown is golden, ours of thorn!
This is thy day of anguish :—ay but God
Counts every tear thou shed'st and lays His Hand
Numbering its pulses down on every heart;
Leads thee through pain to peace, from peace to glory :—
Pardon, high sufferers, if I mourned your wrong:
Angels may bless it! Ages while our Race
From sin to sorrow works its way below
That Race we scourged shall triumph in yon skies!
Their Land perchance rule earth, that Land it loved;
That Land which never will forget its sorrows.
The Timeless works through Time.
Your time will come:
From Heaven ye shall behold your country's greatness:
Asia is dead: Europe survives a while:
What if ere centuries five her crown should fall?
Sad Western Land so long without a name—
Mine be it never, I am all unworthy—
What if thy pangs presage some lordlier birth
Than Earth has witnessed yet? Thy destined Race,
When that which now laments hath passed to glory

That Race shall be a nobler Race than Spain's,
A Race that rivets not the bond but breaks it,
A race the children of some Land which now
Names thee the Sunset World! It little knows
The sunrise of the Future is with thee
Though thunder-showers whose rain was rain of blood
Were its sad omen! Every sunset casts
A circling sunrise round the sphere before it;
Yon orb back-gazing now on Seville's towers—
An angry gaze methinks, a sanguine gaze—
Will dawn in turn on Ganges, Salem, Rome,
Then light once more thy shores. A Spiritual Sun
Our Christian Sun "with healing on its wings"
Rides on not less through spiritual heavens
Cinctures our Planet still with trailing skirts
Of spiritual radiance. Centuries make its day,
Centuries its night; and each successive day
Must pass its predecessors thrice in splendour.
Christ's first great Day hath clasped but half our earth;
As yet not half Earth's Races name His Name:
Sad Land, His Second sunrise is for thee!
The Third will come; and then the endless End.

Land of high Hope, there lived who knew and loved thee!
She died—our Queen—to plead thy cause in Heaven!

I wrought my little work: others shall mend it:
I said of old, "Inter with me my chains!"
I say it now; but add, in sager sense,
"That so all memory of my wrongs shall cease[1]
Nor move in ignorant men a futile spleen."
I deem those chains the best of my possessions—
Wrongs! Had I wrongs? Not I but those poor Indians![2]

[1] That this was Columbus' noble aspiration is proved by a letter of his written late in life.

[2] See note at the end.

THE DEATH OF COPERNICUS

Copernicus died at Fraemberg, a small city at the mouth of the Vistula, A.D. 1543, and, as has been said, though the fact is not certain, the day after he received the first printed copy of that great work, dedicated to Pope Paul III., which embodied his astronomical discoveries, and substituted the Copernican for the Ptolemaic system of the universe. That work he had withheld from publication for thirty-six years, fearing lest the conclusions he had arrived at might possibly prove unsound scientifically, and, *in that case*, till confuted, be dangerous to Faith. These misgivings he had discarded on re-examining the grounds of his philosophy.

HAIL, silent, chaste, and ever sacred stars!
Ye bind my life in one! I well remember
When first your glory pierced my youthful heart:
'Twas Christmas Eve near midnight. From a boat
I watched you long; then, rowing, faced the deep:
Above the storm-loved cliff of Elsinore
Sworded Orion high and higher rose
With brightening belt. The city clocks struck twelve:
Straight from the countless towers rang out their chimes
Hailing the Babe new-born. Along the sea
Vibration waved; and in its depth the stars

Danced as they flashed answering that rapturous hymn
"Glory to God on high and peace on earth."
I shall not long behold them, saith my leech:
He errs: I suffer little.
On my bed
Yon lies my tome—one man's bequest to men.
Is the gift good? From youth to age I toiled
A gleaner in the starry harvest field:
Lo, there one gathered sheaf—
I think I laboured with a stainless aim
If not a single aim. In ancient times
Pythagoras had gleams of this high lore:
Let coming ages stamp his name upon it;
I count it his, not mine.
My earlier book
In substance was as this. But thus I mused;
Christ's simple ones may take offence and cry
"'Tis written, 'God hath made the earth so strong
That it cannot be moved;' science avers
It moves around the sun." Such questioner
Deserves all reverence. Faith is more than Science:
But 'twixt the interpretation and the text
Lies space world-wide. That text meant this—no more—
So solid is the earth concussion none
Though mountains fell can move it. Here is naught
Of motion round the sun. Solidity

To such advance were needful not a bar:
Far flies the pebble forward flung; the flower
Drops at the flinger's foot.
Again I mused;
The Truth of Nature with the Truth Revealed
Accords perforce; not so the illusive gloss
By Nature's scholiasts forced on Nature's page:
That gloss of Ptolemy's made great Nature lie
A thousand years and more. Through countless errors
Thus only, Science feels her way to Truth.
May I not err like Ptolemy? Distrustful
I hid my book for thirty years and six
Cross-questioning with fresh inquest patient skies,
And found there nothing that arraigned my lore
Much that confirmed it. From the Minster tower,
Canon that time at Warnia though unworthy,
I made me charts of angle, sine, and arc:—
Those vigils left my feet so numbed at morn
They scarce could find the altar-step, my hands
Scarce lift the chalice! Day by day I prayed
With adjuration added, "If, my God,
Thou seest my pride suborn my faculties
Place me a witless one among those witless
That beg beneath church porches." Likewise I sued
The poor beside whose beds I ministered—
For their sake I had learned the healing craft—

To fence me with their prayers.
Discovered truths
I blabbed not to the crowd, but told the wise,
Such men as raised our stateliest fanes. In these
I found amazement less than I presaged:
There seemed a leaning in the minds of men
As when a leaning cornfield shews the wind
To such results as in Bologna's schools
Made way when there I dwelt. I note this day
The ecclesiastics of the higher sort
Are with me more than those whose lore is Nature;
These hate the foot that spurns prescription's fence;
Not so my friend, the bishop of old Kulm;
He cries, "Go forward!" Thirty years ago
Milan's famed painter—he of the "Last Supper"—
Whispered me thus, "The earth goes round the sun."
There are whose guess is prophecy.
This night
I make election: twofold choice is mine;
The first, to hurl this book on yonder sea;
The last, to fling it on a flood more vast
And fluctuating more—the mind of man
Crying, "Fare forth and take what God shall send!"
One doubt alone remains; no text it touches
But dangers from within. In days gone by
Near me a youth beside a casement stood,

The sea not distant and a heaven all stars:
Christ's Advent was our theme. He cried, "Look forth!
Yon skies confute the old Faith! When Earth was young
Wistful as lovers, credulous as children,
Men deemed that Earth the centre of the world,
The stars its lackeys and its torch-bearers.
Such science is foredoomed: mankind will learn
This sphere is not God's ocean but one drop
Showered from its spray. Came God from heaven for
that?
Speak no more words!"
That was a tragedy!
A mood may pass; yet moods have murdered souls.
It proved not thus with him.
I looked again:
That face was as an angel's: from his brow
The cloud had passed. Reverent, I spake no word:
Later, albeit at times such moods recurred,
That man was helpful to a nation's soul:
In death he held the Faith.
This Earth too small
For Love Divine! Is God not Infinite?
If so, His Love is infinite. Too small!
One famished babe meets pity more from man
Oft than an army slain! Too small for Love!
Was Earth too small to be by God created?

Why then too small to be redeemed?
The sense
Sees greatness only in the sensuous greatness:
Science in that sees little: Faith sees naught:
The small, the vast, are tricks of earthly vision:
To God, that Omnipresent All-in-Each,
Nothing is small, is far.
More late I knew
A hoary man dim-eyed with restless hands
A zealot barbed with jibe and scoff still launched
At priests and kings and holy womanhood:
One night descending from my tower he spake;
"A God, and God incarnate but for man,
That reasoning beast—and all yon glittering orbs
In cold obstruction left!"
Diverse those twain!
That youth, though dazzled by the starry vastness
And thus despising earth, had awe for God:
That grey-haired fool believed in matter only.
Compassion for those starry races robbed
By earth, like Esau of their birthright just,
Is pretext. They that know not of a God
How know they that the stars have habitants?
'Tis Faith and Hope that spread delighted hands
To such belief; no formal proof attests it.
Concede them peopled; can the sophist prove

Their habitants are fallen? That too admitted,
Who told him that redeeming foot divine
Ne'er trod those spheres? That fresh assumption granted
What then? Is not the Universe a whole?
Doth not the sunbeam herald from the sun
Gladden the violet's bosom? Moons uplift
The tides: remotest stars lead home the lost:
Judæa was one country, one alone:
Not less Who died there died for all. The Cross
Brought help to buried nations: Time opposed
No bar to Love: why then should Space oppose one?
We know not what Time is nor what is Space;—
Why dream that bonds like theirs can bind the
Unbounded?
If Earth be small likelier it seems that Love
Compassionate most and condescending most
To Sorrow's nadir depths, should choose that Earth
For Love's chief triumph, missioning thence her gift
Even to the utmost zenith!

To the Soul

Far more than to the intellect of man
I deemed the gift vouchsafed when on me first
This new-born Science dawned. I said, "Long since
We call God *infinite:* what means that term?
A boy since childhood walled in one small field
Could answer nothing. He who looks on skies

Ablaze with stars, not hand-maids poor of earth
But known for worlds of measureless bulk and swiftness,
Has mounted to another grade of spirit,
Proceeded man. The stars do this for man;
They make Infinitude *imaginable:*
God, by our instincts felt as infinite,
When known becomes such to our total being,
Mind, spirit, heart, and soul. The greater Theist
Should make the greater Christian. Yet, 'tis true
Best gifts may come too soon.
No marvel this:
The earth was shaped for myriad forms of greatness
As Freedom, Genius, Beauty, Science, Art,
Some extant, some to be. Such forms of greatness
Are, through God's will, greatness conditional:
Where Christ is greatest these are great; elsewhere
Great only to betray. Sweetly and sagely
In order grave the Maker of all Worlds
Still modulates the rhythm of human progress;
His angels on whose song the seasons float
Keep measured cadence: all good things keep time
Lest Good should strangle Better. Aristotle
Aspired like me to base on fact and proof
Nature's philosophy. Fate said him nay:
That Fate was kindness hidden—
The natural science of great Aristotle

Died young: his logic lived and helped the Church
To map her Christian Science.
Ancient Thought
And Christian Faith, opposed in most beside,
Held Man in reverence, each. Much came of that:
Matter dethroned, a place remained for spirit:
Old Grecian song called Man creation's lord;
The Christian Creed named him his Maker's Image;
One was a humble reverence; one a proud:
Science that day perchance had made men prouder:
The Ptolemaic scheme had place and use
Till Christian Faith conquering the earth had crowned it:
The arch complete its centering is removed:
That Faith which franchised first the soul of man
Franchises next his mind.
Another knowledge
Man's appanage now was snatched awhile from men,
The Lore of antique ages said or sung:
It rolled, a river through the Athenian vales;
It sank, as though by miracle, in earth;
A fount unsealed by hand divine, it leaps
Once more against the sun.
That strange new birth
Had place when first I trod Italian soil:
Men spake of bards to Dante's self unknown,
To Francis, Bernard, Dominic, Aquinas:

Great Albert knew them not. The oracles
Of lying gods were dumb: but dumb not less
The sage Greek poets, annalists, orators,
For God had uttered voice and leaned from heaven
Waiting the earth's response. The air was mute,
Mute for the Saviour God had breathed it late
Left it His latest sigh. The ages passed:
Alone were Apostolic voices heard;
Then Fathers of the Church; the Schoolmen last.
Clamour surceased: the "Credo" for that cause
Was plainlier heard. The winds and waves had fallen;
And there was a great calm—stillness of spirit
At heart of storm extern. At last God's Truth
Had built o'er earth the kingdom of God's Peace:
Then penance-time was passed: Greece spake once more:
What was that speech but prophecy fulfilled
"The heathen shall become thy heritage?"
Euphrates and Ilissus flow again:
Grey wastes with roses flame. New greatness nears us:
Shall not God's angels reap two harvest fields
Severing the wheat from tares?
Severance is needful,
Yea, needfuller yet will prove as ages pass.
The nobler songs of Greece divulged in verse
Such Truths as Nature had retained though fallen,

Man's heart had prized. Ay, but with these there mixed
Music debasing. Christendom this day
Confronts two gifts, and trials likewise twain:
She must become the mother of great Nations;
Each Nation with the years will *breed* its Book,
Its Bible uninspired. But if these Books
Should prove but sorcerers' juggling wares, these prophets
Stand up false prophets and their word a lie,
A voice from those two Books of Greece and Rome
Will sound their sentence, crying; "In the night
We sang sweet songs the auguries of dawn;
We sang the Mother-land, the household loves,
The all-reverend eld, the virgin sanctitude,
The stranger's right, the altar reared to Pity;
Ye, 'mid the noontide glories turned to black,
Outshamed our worst with worse."
Should that voice peal,
Woe to the Nations which have sinned that sin!
Truth's golden bowl will at the cistern break,
Song's daughters be brought low.
For these two gifts,
The Science new, the Old Lore revived, the time
Seems opportune alike. The earth finds rest:
That Rome which warred on Christ is judged; has vanished;

Those direful heresies of three centuries more,
The hordes barbaric, and, barbaric thrice,
Those Christian Emperors vexing still Christ's Church :—
The Antipopes are gone; the Arabian prophet
Scowls at the West in vain. Yet who can tell
If in some age remote or near a cloud
Blacker than aught that shook the olden world
May rush not from clear skies? That hour upon us
"Quieta non movere" may become
Wisdom's sum total; to repress not spur
Progressive thought the hour's necessity;
Against their will the truthfullest spirits may cry,
"Better to wait than launch the bark of knowledge
There when the breakers roar!"
Work on and fear not!
Work, and in hope, though sin that hope may cheat;
Work, knowing this, that, when God's lesser gifts
Are mocked by mortals, God into that urn
Which stands for aye gift-laden by His throne
Thrusts deeplier yet His hand and upward draws
His last—then chief—of mercies—Retribution.
Should man abusing use this knowledge vast
Not for relieving of God's suffering poor
But doubling of their burthens; not for peace
But keener sharpening of war's battle-axe,
And fleshlier solace of the idle and rich,

God will to such redouble pain for sin.
Such lot may lie before us. This is sure
That, as colossal Sanctity walks oft
In humblest vales not less a pigmy race
May strut on mountains. If from heights of science
Men should look forth o'er worlds on worlds unguessed
And find therein no witness to their God,
Naught but Man's image chaunting hymns to Man,
"Great is thy wisdom, Man, and strong thy hand,"
God will repay the madness of that boast
With madness guilty less—a brain imbecile.
Races there live, once sage and brave, that now
Know not to light a fire! If impious men
Press round Truth's gate with Intellect's fleshlier lust—
For what is Godless Intellect but fleshly?—
Sudden a glacial wind shall issue forth
And strike those vile ones blind!
Should that day come
Let no man cease from hope. Intensest ill
Breeds good intensest. For the sons of God
That knowledge won by bad men will survive.
If fleets one day should pass the onrushing storm
That Cross which lights their prow will reach but sooner
The lands that sit in night. If Empires new
Wage war on Faith each drop of martyr blood
Will sow once more Faith's harvest. Virgin spirits

Raised from a child-like to an angel pureness,
Will walk in Chastity's sublimer flame;
God's earthquake shake men to their fitting places
True men and false the sons of light and night,
No more, as now, confused. God's Church will make
Since, though she errs not yet her best may err,
For sins of good men dead due expiation,
Then for her second triumph claim as site
A planet's, not an empire's girth. True kings
Will fence their thrones with freemen not with serfs;
True priests by serving rule. The Tree of Life
First made our spirits food, that Tree which slew us
Will prove her sister. Knowledge *then* will clasp
Supremacy o'er matter, earth's fruition,
Not by the plucking of a fruit forbidden
But by the valorous exercise austere
Of faculties, God's gift.
"Lift up your heads,
Ye everlasting gates," the Psalmist sang,
"So shall the King of Glory enter in."
Lives there who doubts that when the Starry Gates
Lift up their heads like minster porches vast
At feasts before a marvelling nation's eyes,
And shew, beyond, the universe of God,
Lives there who doubts that, entering there, man's
mind

Must see before it far a God who enters
Flashing from star to star? Lives there who doubts
That those new heavens beyond all hope distent
Must sound their Maker's praise? Religion's self
That day shall wear an ampler crown; all Truths
Now constellated in the Church's Creed
Yet dim this day because man's mind is dim,
Perforce dilating as man's mind dilates
O'er us must hang, a new Theology,
Our own yet nobler even as midnight heavens
Through crystal ether kenned more sharply shine
Than when mist veiled the stars! Let others
doubt—
My choice is made.

The stars! Once more they greet me!
Thanks to the wind that blows yon casement back!
'Tis cold; but vigils old have taught me patience.
Is this the last time, O ye stars? Not so—
'Tis not the death-chill yet. Those northern heavens
Yield me once more that Northern Sign long loved;
Yon sea is still, its glass, though many a star
Faints now in broader beams. Yon winter moon
Has changed this cell thick-walled and ofttimes dim
Into a silver tent. O light, light, light,
How great thou art! Thou only, free of space,

Bindest the universe of God in one:
Matter, methinks, in thee is changed to spirit:—
What if our bodies, death subdued, shall rise
All light—compact of light!
I had forgotten
Good Cardinal Schomberg's missive: here it lies:
I read it three weeks since. "The Holy Father
Wills that your labours stand divulged to man;
Wills likewise that his name should grace your tome
As dedicate to him." I read in haste:
That such high grace should 'scape my memory thus
Argues, I think, some failure of my powers.
So be it! Their task is wrought.
The tide descends
The caves send forth anew those hoarse sea-thunders
Lulled when full flood satiates their echoing roofs.
They tell me this, that God, their God, hath spoken
And the great deep obeys. That deep forsakes
The happy coasts where fishers spread their nets,
The fair green slopes with snowy flocks bespread,
The hamlets red each morn with cloaks of girls
And loud with shouting children. Forth he fares
To solitudes of ocean waste and wide
Cheered by that light he loves. I too obey:
I too am called to face the Infinite,
Leaving familiar things and faces dear

Of friends and tomes forth leaning from yon wall:
Me too the Uncreated Light shall greet
When cleansed to bear it. O, how sweet was life!
How sweeter must have been had I been worthy—
Grant me Thy Beatific Vision, Lord:
Then shall those eyes star-wearied see and live!

February 1889.

SONNETS CHIEFLY ON MEDIÆVAL ART

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

He left the fortress-palace of his sires:
The blood of princes coursing through his veins
Flushed him no more with pride's insurgent fires
Than streams, hill-born, make proud the sundered plains:
He loved that lowly life the world disdains;
Contemned the insensate pomp that world admires;—
He walked, in soul conversing with those choirs
That sing where peace eternal lives and reigns.
Tender Loretto to her breast elate
Caught him a youngling. Silent, meek, serene,
His small feet sought the poor beside her gate
That wondered at the brightness of his mien
Even then a holy creature dedicate
To Wisdom's sovran seat and sacred Queen.

Beauteous Campania! In the old Roman morn
The great ones of the nations rushed to thee:
In thy rich gardens by the full-voiced sea
Wearied they slept, and woke like men re-born.
Not so the greatest of thy sons! In scorn
He passed the snare; his spirit strong and free
Less honouring Pestum's roses than that thorn
The crown of Calvary's Victim. Who was he?
The Ascetic who refused a prelate's throne
Lest worldly aims with cares divine should mix;
The Builder lifting fanes of thought not stone,
Far less poor Babel Towers of sun-burnt bricks;
The man who summed all Truth,[1] yet drew alone
His sacred science from his crucifix.

Great Saint! In pictures old a sun there flamed
Soft sphere of radiance on thy vest of snow;
It taught us that from hearts by sin unshamed,
The mind's inspirer best, alone could flow
Sapience like thine. "Master of those who know!"
At heaven's high mark alone thy shaft was aimed:
Therefore, by thee unwoo'd by thee disclaimed
Science terrestrial sought thy threshold low.
Beneath thy cell she knelt: all pagan lore
From mines of Plato and the Stagyrite

[1] The allusion is to the *Summa Theologiæ*.

To thee she tendered. Thou, with spiritual light
Piercing each ingot of that golden ore,
To gems didst change them meet to pave the floor
Of God's great Temple on the empyreal height.

GIOTTO'S CAMPANILE AT FLORENCE

Enchased with precious marbles pure and rare
How gracefully it soars and seems the while
From every polished stage to laugh and smile
Playing with gleams of that clear southern air!
Fit resting-place methinks its summit were
For a descended Angel! happy isle
Mid life's rough sea of sorrow force and guile
For Saint of royal race or vestal fair
In this seclusion—call it not a prison—
Cloistering a bosom innocent and lonely.
O Tuscan Priestess! gladly would I watch
All night one note of thy loud hymn to catch
Sent forth to greet the sun when first, new-risen,
He shines on that aërial station only!

OLD PICTURES AT FLORENCE

Thrice happy they who thus before man's eyes
Restored the placid image of his prime;

Illustrating th' abortive shows of Time
With gleams authentic caught from Paradise.
Those Godlike forms are men! Impure disguise
By Man now suffered! O for wings to climb
Once more to Virtue's mountain seats sublime
And *be* what here we poorly recognise!
From these fair pictures our Humanity
Looks down upon us kindly. 'Tis no dream:—
Truth stands attested by Consistency;
Here all the Virtues meet in peace supreme
So meet, so blend, that in those Forms we see
The sum of all we are and fain would be.

ON A PICTURE BY COREGGIO AT PARMA

Paint thou the pearl gates of the Morning Star
Loftiest of Painters and the loveliest
For only of thy pencil worthy are
Those ever-smiling mansions of the blest!
Thyself when homeward summoned to thy rest
Couldst scarce have marked our earth's receding bar:
No happier shapes could greet thee near or far
Than oft in life thy radiant fancy drest.

God when He framed the earth beheld it good;
That light from His approving smile that shone
For thee waned never from her features wan:
Before thine eyes—unfallen if unrenewed—
Still moved that Race supreme and fairest made;
And Love and Joy, twin stars, still on their foreheads played.

COREGGIO'S CUPOLAS AT PARMA

Creatures all eyes and brows and tresses streaming
By speed divine blown back:—within, all fire
Of wondering zeal and storm of bright desire;
Round the broad dome the immortal throngs are beaming:
With elemental Powers that vault is teeming:
We gaze, and, gazing, join yon fervid choir
In spirit launched on wings that ne'er can tire
Like those that buoy the breasts of children dreaming.
The exquisitest hand that e'er in light
Revealed the subtlest smile of new-born pleasure
Here sounds the abysses and attains the height
Is strong the strength of heavenly hosts to measure
Draws back the azure curtain of the skies
And antedates our promised Paradise.

A PICTURE BY ANDREA DEL SARTO, IN THE CATHEDRAL OF PISA

Are there not virtues which we know not of
By men unnamed because not met with here,
Perchance too lofty for this lowly sphere
Our great and glorious heritage above,
Yet here in virtues which we know and love
Dimly foreshown? Thus dimly to the seer
Rehearsed in humbler kinds that round us move
The sovran attributes of man appear.
Madonna! I have hung day after day
On thy strange beauty with a devout eye;
And now, all marvel, rapture, ecstasy
Rebuked, or harmonised, or worn away,
I gaze; and ask what I have asked; and stay
Lingering, and vainly hoping a reply.

A PICTURE BY PIETRO PERUGINO

Glory to God of all fair things the maker
For that He dwelleth in the mind of Man!
Glory to Man of that large grace partaker
For that he storeth thus his spirit's span
With shapes our earth creates not, neither can

Till like a flood her youth shall overtake her,
And voices new to loftier labours wake her
High artist then, as now poor artizan.
Mark, mark those awful sons of martyrdom
With their uplifted hands but eyes down-cast
As though the uncreated light had dazed them :—
The error of our brief existence past
They stand like saints resurgent from the tomb,
Suspended still on that great Voice which raised them !

FRESCOES BY MASACCIO

Well hast thou judged that sentence "Had ye Faith
Ye could move mountains." In those forms I see
What God at first ordained that Man should be,
His Image crowned triumphant over death.
Born of that Word which never perisheth
Those Prophets here resume the empery
Of old in Eden lost. Their eye, their breath
Cancels disease, lays prone the anarchy
Of Passion's fiercest waves. Secret as Fate
Like Fate's the powers they wield are infinite :
Their very thoughts are laws : their will is weight—
On as they move in majesty and might
The demons yield their prey, the graves their dead :
And to her centre Earth is conscious of their tread.

A TYROLESE VILLAGE

This village, thronged with churches, needeth none:
Each house like some old missal rich and quaint
Is blazoned o'er with prophet, seer, and saint:
Each court its separate sanctity hath won.
Here a great Angel stands crowned with the sun:
Magdalene there pours her perpetual plaint:
There o'er her child the Maiden without taint
Bends—as His mercy bends o'er worlds undone.
Of earth's proud centres none like this recalls
That mystic City in the realms supernal
Built upon God whose light is God alone;
The very stones cry out: the eloquent walls
Plainly confess that Name the proud disown;
The Father's glory and the Son Eternal.

AN EARLY PICTURE BY RAFFAEL

Dark, infinitely dark, a midnight blue
Those orbs that, resting on the skies, appear
To pierce the veil of Heaven and wander through
Searching the centre of the starry sphere:
Angels, be sure, unseen are hovering near!
Their fanning plumes with faintest blush imbue

That pearly cheek, a lily else in hue,
And from that brow the auburn tresses clear.
One hand is laid upon her mantled breast
To us an unrevealed paradise,
Nor bodied in the ascetic Painter's dream—
Hidden it lies in everlasting rest
Beneath those purple robes that earthward stream
Cyphered with star-emblazoned mysteries.

BOCCACCIO AND CERTALDO

The world's blind pilgrims tendering praise for blame,
Passing Certaldo, point and smile and stare
And with Boccaccio's triumph din the air:—
Ah, but for him how high had soared thy fame
Italian Song! False Pleasure is a flame
That brands the Muses' pleasaunce; burns it bare
As some volcanic isle with barren glare:
O Italy! exult not in thy shame!
'Twas here, 'twas here thy Song's crystalline river
Lost its last sight of hoar Parnassus' head
And swerved through flowery meads to sandy bar:
Its saintly mission here it spurned for ever:
It sighed to Laura, and with Tancred bled
But caught no second flash from Dante's star!

THE CAMPO SANTO AT PISA—1

There needs not choral song nor organ's pealing:—
This mighty cloister of itself inspires
Thoughts breathed like hymns from spiritual choirs
While shades and lights in soft succession stealing
Along it creep, now veiling now revealing
Strange forms here traced by Painting's earliest sires,
Angels with palms and purgatorial fires
And Saints caught up and demons round them reeling.
Love, long remembering those she could not save
Here hung the cradle of Italian Art:
Faith rocked it: hence, like hermit child, went forth
That heaven-born Power which beautified the earth:
She perished when the world had lured her heart
From her true friends, Religion and the grave.

THE CAMPO SANTO AT PISA—2

Lament not thou: the cold winds as they pass
Through the ribbed fret-work with low sigh or moan
Lament enough; let them lament alone
Counting the sear leaves of the innumerous grass
With thin, soft sound like one prolonged alas!
Spread thou thy hands on sun-touched vase or stone

That yet retains the warmth of sunshine gone,
And drink warm solace from that ponderous mass.
Gaze not around thee. Monumental marbles
Time-clouded frescoes mouldering year by year
Dim cells in which all day the night-bird warbles—
These things are sorrowful elsewhere not here:
A mightier Power than Art's hath here her shrine:
Stranger! thou tread'st the soil of Palestine!

THE FEAST OF ST. PETER'S CHAIR AT ANTIOCH

At Antioch first the Name of Christ
Came down and clothed His Race:
Enthroned at Antioch Peter reared
His earlier resting-place.
O Eastern Church! Imperial Schism
Swept from thy forehead crown and chrism:
Loose from the fold thy Cæsars broke:
Thy penance came—the Moslem yoke!

O Eastern Church so great of old
What art thou at this hour?
God called thee! why that backward gaze
Servile to mortal Power?
Thou stand'st amid the salt sand-waste
A queenly statue fire-defaced;
A Pillar wrecked of sentenced Pride,
A dead Faith's Image petrified!

Eastward, heaven-warned, the Empire ranged;
Byzantium ruled, not Rome:
Westward the Church; the Vatican
Not Salem was her home.
Like ships that each the other pass
Swift-borne through mist o'er seas of glass
Those Spirits of a converse lot
Each other crossed and answered not.

Of all those Patriarchal Thrones
Whereon the Apostles sate
But one survives, the bond and seal
Of Christ's Episcopate:
There Peter reigns, and by his side
That great compeer[1] who with him died;
One walked the Gentiles' utmost bound,
One sate, the Church's centre crowned.

The Alexandrian altar fell,
Jerusalem, like thine,
Poor Reliquaries they of Faith
This hour, no more the Shrine:
Chalcedon, Ephesus, and Nice,
The Councils like the Arts of Greece,
Their names are fair in sacred lore;
The spirit of Life is theirs no more.

[1] St. Paul.

Thus in the dust of centuries sleep
The glories once so bright;
Rome, Rome alone whose vigil lasts
Through all the wondering night
Still marks with awe and notes with care
The spots where orbs that are not were:
Her Ephemerides retain
Their names and places—not in vain.

The Pilot of the Barque divine
Still sees as on he steers
Sad Antioch's ever-setting star
O'erhang the seas of years;
Sees rather where it shone of old
A radiance posthumous and cold,
A monitory gleam and grand
Impassive as a dead man's hand.

Dread monument! 'Tis thine to lay
That warning Hand and frore
On breasts of panting kings and realms
That kings for Gods adore:
To freeze the Gentile Hope, to bind
The loftier with the lowlier mind,
And with the weight of all the past
Confirm that greatness shaped to last.

MURILLO'S PICTURE,
"THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION"

The picture which suggested this poem is in the Church of the Sacred Heart, at Bournemouth, to which it was presented by the late Count de Torre Diaz. To his memory this poem is inscribed.

"A SIGN was seen in heaven: a Woman stood;
Beneath her feet the moon." That waning moon
'Neath yonder pictured Apparition curved
Is Time there dying with his dying months:
The Spirit shewed that vision to Saint John
Exiled in Patmos Isle. The best beloved
Deserved such solace best.

She stands in heaven:
Not yet the utmost mountain-peaks of earth
Forth from the hoary deep unlifted still
Have felt her foot's pure touch. A cloud from God
On streaming like a tide thus far hath borne her

To the threshold only of the house of man:
Angelic heads and wings beneath her gleam
And lily and rose and palm. Her knee is bent:
Her moon-like face is tearful with great awe:
Her universe is God and other none;
Piercing all worlds her gaze is fixed on Him:
She waits His will supreme.

Men of good-will
Draw near in faith honouring the mystery!
The sunrise of your wondrous world of Faith
Was when the angel spake and at his word
Mary believed. Its noon was Pentecost
Then when the Church of God stood up sun-clad
By Him, the ascended Sun of Righteousness.
This is not noon, nor sunrise. This is dawn,
The aurora of those spiritual heaven and earth
Decreed, Man's spiritual portion yet to come.
For them alone material worlds shall be;
Their glory shall but be this pledge fulfilled;
Their loveliness shall be but hers writ large;
Their fruitfulness the type of hers: her life
When time is ripe shall be a music-strain
Tuning all harmonies of time; itself
An echo through the centuries prolonged
From this first bird-note clear!

That painter's hand
Wrought well. Yon robe glitters, a pearl of dawn,
Yon purple scarf blown back by her advance
Is dark with dews and shades of vanquished night;
The raised hands upward pointing from that breast
Are matutinal with some heavenlier beam
Than streaks our east. That sunless mist behind her
Wins but from her its glow.

O young fair face—
For, though that Form to Maiden-graciousness
Hath reached the face is maiden less than child
Or, both in one, an earlier mystery
Precursor of that Maiden-Motherhood
Which blends two gifts divine. Child-Prophet soft—
What thoughts are hers? He only knows who sends them:
From Him they come; to Him once more ascend.
Child-Prophet sad; feels she the destined weight
Of crowns and sceptres and the wide earth's praise
Honouring earth's humblest? She that would be nought,
Must she be Queen of all?

Not yet; not yet;
Ere comes that day she must be Queen of Woes:
This, this is the beginning not the end;

A world redeemed must be a world sin-marred:
That world as yet exists not. This is She
Through whom, though man had never fallen, his God
Then too had dwelt with Man—so taught the Seer[1]—
Not victim, but triumphant. Sleep, O Eve,
Thy Daughter's foot—yon picture veils yet shews it—
Thy Daughter's foot, "the Woman's," the Foretold,
Whose sacred Seed, "the Woman's Seed," through her
Shall bruise the serpent's head not yet subdues it:
Not yet yon waning moon hath gazed on guilt:
Transience is not transgression. High in spheres
No autumn ever touched, the Tree of Life
Stands; and close by, as pure, the Tree of Knowledge:
The twain commix their lights; the twain are one:
All yet is archetypal: all is healing:
Not yet the fruit is plucked: not yet God's frown
Makes Eden dark.

I raise mine eyes once more:
That breeze which onward wafts her sucked the flowers
That pave the summits of the Hills of God.
The "Hills of God!" He sang them well, that bard[2]
Great-hearted, who for love of Christ preferred
The priestly vestment to the singing robe;

[1] Scotus. [2] Father Faber.

Whose monument[1] this day stands consummate.
Thus sang he, God's Decrees his arduous theme:
Thus sang he—song severe, not winged by verse—
"High on the summits of the Hills of God
There spreads a table-land immeasurable;[2]
Not cherub's eye can grasp it; seraph's flight
Reach its remoter verge. Across it moves
Alone the ordered march of God's Decrees
From infinite distance on to infinite:
Their birth-place no man knows." Methinks I see them,
A cloudy pageant dim yet crowned by fire,
A cloudy pageant of advancing Gods,
With feet which tread that shadowy stage, nor less
With vans outstretched winnowing the air. A breath
Strikes on my brow; and strains I hear like sighs
Of seas round coasts far distant.

Child of Heaven,
The First-born, save thy Son, in those Decrees,
The Elect, the Immaculate, the Full of grace
Which, for that Son's sake, fenced thee from His foe;
Foam-born from seas of sanctity alone
The seas of all the sanctities of God,

[1] The Church of the London Oratory.
[2] This thought is to be found in one of Father Faber's prose works.

And borne—that six days' work as yet unwrought—
Above the heaving crests of things to be,
A Gift predestined, yet a Gift reserved;
Say, must that foot which treads yon waning orb
Tread later earth, our earth? It will not catch
Her taint; but where it treads, those other feet
Will leave ensanguined prints—the Feet of God.

HYMN:

THE FEAST OF ST. PETER'S CHAIR AT ROME

I FAWN not on the Roman height—
Cæsarian laurels, wreathe not ye
A harp of Christian Psalmody!
Whoever builds, and not on Right
Though high he build as eagle's flight
Can never true acceptance find
With manly heart or equal mind.
Though every State, though land and sea
  Though all the flying years of Time
Should bend to Power unjust the knee
  And venerate with rite and rhyme
True sway is God's, and his alone
Who holds from God a righteous throne.

But I the Fisherman revere
  Who left the Galilean lake
  And all he loved for Christ's dear sake;—

Who left his nets and rules a sphere.
Rock of the Rock! From Him alone,
Eternal Rock, and Corner Stone,
That Name and Function didst thou take
Through Him that great Confession make!
Rock of the Rock! A Rock is She
Who, built on thee and strong by thee,
Resounds it everlastingly!

"And will ye also go away?"
"To whom, O Master, shall we go?
The words of Life that lasts for aye
With Thee are found. Behold we know—
We doubt not—we are sure indeed—
Thou art the Christ, the expected One;
Thou art the Christ, the promised Seed,
The Living God's Anointed Son."

Mystery of Unity,
Of all the mysteries the key!
Prime Sacrament that bind'st like Fate
Created things and uncreate!
Godhead in Persons Three in One:
In Him all harmonies began:
And from His archetypal throne
Descends the chain that ends in Man.
In One our race transgressed and died:

In One it lives, the Crucified.
"One Faith, one Baptism;"—Truth is one;
For separate Truths or new or old
Form still one family one fold
One everlasting unison.
"I say to thee, thou art the Rock;
And on this Rock my Church I found:
Nor Powers of Hell, nor mortal shock
Shall shake that Church unto the ground.
And I the Keys will give to thee
Of heaven's great Kingdom, earth around:
That which thou loosest loosed shall be;
And what thou bindest shall be bound."

The cloud of Time is lifted. Lo!
What man is he that, sole and slow,
Forth moves o'er Haran's well-loved plain,
With forehead turned to Canaan?
That Unity which Abel's blood
Dissolved; which God restored in Seth;
Which Noah rescued from the Flood;
Again Corruption dooms to death.
Nimrod has lifted up on high
The brand of godless Tyranny:
And Anarchy, the converse woe,
Has reigned and lies with Babel low.

The single, long transmitted Tongue
  Is broken into dialects:
The single Faith, held fast so long,
  Gives way to idols and to sects.
That Covenant whose rainbow span
Embraced the total hopes of man,
Totters and shakes but is not dead.
Again through One it rears its head,
And, narrowing to a centre, forth
One day shall spring to clasp the earth.
Strong is that Patriarch's Faith and true
Who bids the Patriarch world adieu;
Sole Patriarch of an order new.
The seal of God on one—but one—
Is pressed; and forth he fares alone.
  "Simon, behold, your souls to gain,
    Satan hath longed with longings sore:
  That he may sift you even as grain
    Is sifted on the granary floor.
  But I for thee my prayer have made;
    That thy Faith fail not, nor decay:
  Converted once be strong to aid;
    Strengthen thy Brethren day by day."

The cloud of Time is raised once more.
A city shades a far-off shore;

And the red sunset many a mile
Burns silent on the silent Nile.
An old man dies: around his bed
Twelve Patriarch Brethren take their stand:
Each kneels: on each he lays his hand:
One crowns he—o'er the rest the head.
"Lion of all the sacred Fold
O Judah, in thy strength thou art:—
Till Shiloh comes, the King foretold,
Thy Sceptre never shall depart."
The seal of majesty on one
Is pressed once more—on one alone.

Long ran the promise underground:
Long pined the sacred Race in chains
Then, bursting from their prison bound,
Retrod at last their Fathers' plains,
Resurgent from Egyptian glooms
That figured first those Catacombs
Wherein, for centuries three, abode
The Christian Judah sealed by God.
The Law was given: a brazen band
It fenced from baser realms that land
Predestined from the first to be
An isthmus in a stormy sea
Joining the Patriarchs' Church with her

In whom the Apostles minister,
And making visibly of twain
One Church, one Household, and one Reign.
Then rose at last the Throne decreed.
Who grasped the sceptre? Judah's seed—
The Shepherd summoned from above,
The sworded man who wept and strove
The man heart-frail yet strong through Love.
"Lovest thou Me with mightier love
Than these, thy brethren?"—"Master, yea;
Thou knowest I love Thee."—"Simon, prove
Thy love and feed My lambs for aye.
Lovest thou Me with love more deep
Than these, the others?"—"Master, yea;
Thou knowest I love Thee."—"Feed My sheep:
Shepherd and feed them day by day."

Who chains that Shepherd? Chain who will,
The Evangel is unshackled still!
Forth, like an eagle from its eyry,
Abroad o'er all the world it flies
And, poised in regions solitary,
Gives back the sunset to the skies.
The Day of Pentecost had come:
Descending from that upper room
Who first the Gospel trumpet blew,

Opening Christ's Kingdom to the Jew?
Before the Gentiles next who laid
His great commission, undismayed,
Washing the feet, and hands, and head
Of realms unclean till then and dead?
Who, when the Council long had sate,
Closed with a word the loud debate?
Who with a royal meekness took
A younger brother's wise rebuke?
Who judged and judged with death the lie
Of Sacrilege and Blasphemy?
—His shadow cures disease; for he
The shadow is of Christ beneath:
Before his face the demons flee:
He holds the keys of life and death.
"Simon, when thou wert young, behold
Thy girdle thou didst bind at will;
And in the peaceful days of old
Thy footsteps freely wandered still:
But when thy head is old and grey
Thy hands thou shalt stretch forth; and lo
Thee shall another gird that day
And bear thee where thou wouldst not go."

A thousand years passed by between
The earlier and the later storms

Ere yet across the golden scene
Rushed back old Error's myriad forms.
That Eastern hand which raised again
Samaria's altar withered soon;
And on that altar bones of men
Were burned beneath the Arabian Moon.
But, in the West, o'er all the lands
The Rock cast far its sacred shade
Till regions bare as desert sands
Grew green at last with wood and glade.
That Crown august which like a star
O'er all things and through all things shone
Was regal, feudal, popular;
Was friend to each and slave to none.
—What Power was that which, strong yet meek,
The equipoise of earth maintained
Siding for ever with the weak?
That bound the haughty; freed the chained?
The Church of God, that Church which wound
Around the globe the Apostles' zone—
What clasped that zone; that girdle bound?
The Roman Unity alone.

He who established Power on earth
And sanctioned Order and Degree
First raised, supreme o'er every hearth,

The sceptre of Paternity;
And next, o'er every realm and nation,
The delegated thrones of Kings
Within the bounds of civil station
Potent above terrestrial things.
Lastly he raised and raised o'er all
The Sceptre Apostolical.
Whoe'er, seduced by pride or fear,
Affronts, within its proper sphere,
That great Pontific dignity—
Though emperor or king he be,
Though arms and arts make strong his cause
And large pretence of ancient laws,
O'erlaid by centuries of wrong;
Though every pen and every tongue
Hail him Deliverer; and the acclaim
Of ages echoes back the name—
That prince against God's edict fights
Sole basis of inferior rights.
He that abets betrays him too;
A flatterer, and no liegeman true.
He Roman is; but takes his side
With Pagan Rome self-deified
Against the Saviour and the Bride.
"Not for the world My prayer I make:
I pray for those Thou gavest to Me:

I taught them all things for Thy sake—
Make perfect Thou their Unity:
As Thou with Me art One even so
Make them My flock in one agree
Father, that thus the world may know
That I am Thine and come from Thee."

Who chains the Apostle? Chain who will
The hands that bind he blesses still!
Them that abhor him them that fly
Still, still he follows with his eye
As some white peak o'er seaward streams
Casts glances far and snowy gleams.
They that renounce thee beg thine alms:
They live but on thy grace benign;
Thine are their creeds and thine their psalms:
Whate'er they keep of Faith is thine.
Whate'er of Truth with them remains
Is theirs but in Tradition's right:
Their sheep that die on wealthier plains
Are pastured on thy hills by night.
True Shepherd King! all powers beside
Are transient and an empty show:
Around thee like a shifting tide
The world's great pageants ebb and flow.
True pilot of the Saviour's Bark!

Who sails with thee is safe: the flood
But lifts more high Thy sacred Ark
And floats it to the feet of God.
Thy God revealed His Son to thee:
Thy Maker called thee from above:
He chose thee from eternity,
He sealed thee with electing love.
—Thy Strength is Prayer. For them pray most
With love matured in God's own beam
Who make of liberty their boast
Yet sell true freedom for a dream!

Prince of the Apostles! Like an hour
The years have passed since first that Word
Which signed thee with vicarial power
Beside that Syrian lake was heard.
O, strong since then, from heaven's far shore
Hold forth that Cross of old reversed;
O bind the world to Christ once more:
The chains of Satan touch and burst.
Strengthen the Apostolic Thrones:
Make strong without and pure within
That Temple built of living stones
With planetary discipline:
Strengthen the thrones of Kings: the State
Encompass with religious awe;

Paternal rule corroborate:
Impart new majesty to Law:
Strengthen the City and the Orb
Of Earth till each has reached its term:
Insurgent powers and impious curb;
The righteous and the just confirm.

Two or three lines at the beginning of this poem are taken from a well-known passage in St. Jerome.

SONNETS

SONNETS

ROBERT BROWNING

I

GONE from us! that strong singer of late days—
Sweet singer should be strong—who, tarrying here
Chose still rough music for his themes austere
Hard-headed, aye but tender-hearted lays
Carefully careless, garden half half maze:
His thoughts he sang, deep thoughts to thinkers dear,
Now flashing under gleam of smile or tear,
Now veiled in language like a breezy haze
Chance-pierced by sunbeams from the lake it covers.
He sang man's ways—not heights of sage or saint;
Not highways broad, not haunts endeared to lovers:
He sang life's byways, sang its angles quaint
Its Runic lore inscribed on stave or stone;
Song's "short-hand" strain: its key oft his alone.

II

Shakespeare's old oak "gnarled and unwedgeable"
Yields not so sweet a wood to harp or lyre
As tree of smoother grain; and chorded shell
Is spanned by strings tenderer than iron wire.
What then? Stern tasks iron and oak require!
Iron deep-mined, hard oak from stormy fell:
Steel-armed the "black ship" breasts the ocean's swell:
Oak-ribbed laughs back the raging tempest's ire.
Old friend, thy song I deem a ship whose hold
Is stored with mental spoils of ampler price
Than Spain's huge galleons in her age of gold
Or Indian caracks from the isles of spice.
Brave Argosy! cleave long the waves as now;
And all the Sea-Gods sing around thy prow!

III

Mourn, Italy, with England mourn since both
He sang with song's discriminating love;
Thy towers that flash the wooded crag above;
Thy trellised vineyard's purple overgrowth;
Thy matin balm; thy noontide's pleasing sloth;
Thy convent bell, dim lake, and homeward dove;

Thine evening star that through the bowered alcove
Silvers the white flight of the circling moth.
He sang thy best and worst; false love, fierce war,
Renaissance craft, child-graces, saintly Art,
Old pomps from "Casa Guidi's" Windows seen:
There dwelt he happy; there that Minstrel-Queen
Who shared his poet-crown but gladdened more
To hold unshared her Poet's manly heart.

IV

His feast of life was rich—this life of ours;
All human things 'neath yonder azure cope
For him were deep in meaning, wide in hope,
Nor these alone: above our lakes and bowers
Mad dance he saw of Genii scattering flowers:
His fancy kept a key strange gates to ope;
Became at will that quaint kaleidoscope
Which turns all shapes to patterns, then devours
The last to fashion new. His grasp was large:
He knew that with the suffering heart of man
Compared all matter-worlds are scant of span:
His song had shafts that pierced a spirit-targe:
Its flight outsoared the agnostic poet-clan
Faithful to humblest song's implicit charge.

"THEY NEVER MET"

Somewhere she lives—I know not who or where—
The good, the kind, the tender, and the true,
Whose least of charms is this, that she is fair!
Who lives unknown scarce known or known to few;
He will not meet her! her who might renew
A spring that flowerless died and bid him wear
That summer crown they only win who share—
Noon's forest-wreath still fresh with morning dew.
Is *she* then happy? Are her fates fulfilled?
Perchance she sits this fading eve alone
By yonder ebbing Thames with fingers chilled
Clasping some rain-washed rosebud never blown.—
How oft he may have passed thee, sweet Unknown,
Sole amid crowds, with pulse a moment stilled!

DANTE'S BEATRICE

Beata—Beatrice![1] One are these!
The names are divers; but the named is one,
One as that star which cheers the morning dun
Is one with her that silvers evening seas:
The "Blest" must send the "Blessing"; Heaven's decrees

[1] "Beatrice" means "the Giver of Blessing."

Made Beatrice blest as other none:
Perforce she breathed in turn her benison
O'er earth with supernatural sanctities
Crowning Earth's two chief gifts, Genius and Love.
That Child by Dante met on Arno's side
Smiled later on her Lover from above:
That Woman Dante's genius glorified:
She led him, star by star, through Paradise:
She lives the Urania of his Christian skies.

CARDINAL NEWMAN

Thy ninety years on earth have passed away:
At last thou restest 'mid that heavenly clime
Where Act is Rest, and Age perpetual prime:
Thy noblest, holiest work begins this day,
Begins, not ends! Best Work is Prayer; and they
Who plead, absolved from bonds of Space and Time,
With lordliest labour work that work sublime
Order our planet with benignest sway.
So work, great Spirit! Thy toils foregone each year
Bear fruit on earth! Thousands but praise thee now:
Those laureates soon will bend a brightening brow
O'er tomes of thine; on each may drop a tear
For friends that o'er blind oceans pushed their prow
Self-cheated of a guiding light so clear.

CARDINAL MANNING

LAVINGTON AND ROME

I learned his greatness first at Lavington:
The moon had early sought her bed of brine
But we discoursed till now each starry sign
Had sunk: our theme was one and one alone:
"Two minds supreme," he said, "our earth has known;
One sang in science; one served God in song;
Aquinas—Dante." Slowly in me grew strong
A thought, "These two great minds in him are one;—
'Lord, what shall this man do?'"[1] Later at Rome
Beside the dust of Peter and of Paul
Eight hundred mitred sires of Christendom
In Council sat. I marked him 'mid them all;
I thought of that long night in years gone by
And cried, "At last my question meets reply."

ELD

All hail, thou Winter Solstice of man's life!
Lord of the faded flower and garnered sheaf,
That pluck'st from Time its nothings, leaf by leaf,
Cancell'st its troubles, dost annul its strife:

[1] St. John xxi. 21.

Thy scythe is sacred; healing is thy knife!
Small things thou tak'st: yet one thou giv'st—the chief—
In noble death our petulant raptures brief
Stilling, as organs still the lute and fife.
All hail, divine Detachment! When thy rod
Sweeps from the world its pomp, its praise, its pelf
Say, what remains? The Pagan answered "Self":[1]
Made strong by faith the Christian answers, "God."
All good our youth desired was God! Thou dim
Decline, find all things summed and sealed in him!

TO THOMAS W. ALLIES

ON READING HIS RECENT BOOK, "THE HOLY SEE AND THE WANDERING OF THE NATIONS"

Allies! I deem that vision fair and brave
Though dread which found in thee no dim-eyed seer
That vision of fierce ages—never our sphere
So shook before—when onward, wave on wave,
The Tribes Barbaric o'er the Empire drave
Launched from the terrible North; while froze for fear
Cities high-walled, that tramp barbaric near,
Like pale sleep-walker waking in some cave

[1] "Quid superest? Medea superest."
SENECA, *Tragedy of Medea.*

With lions girt around. The strife was dire;
The wreck complete; ruin o'er earth held reign:
Not less henceforth mankind through help of thine
Shall note on all those waves a Hand of fire
Writing the evangel of one Hope Divine
Day-dawn from Constantine to Charlemagne.

UNCONSCIOUS FACULTIES

Say, do the mighty winds in silence sweep
The crystal breadth of ocean's quivering plane?
The unmeasured forests quickening in their sleep
Breathe they no sound or breathe that sound in vain?
Say, can our compass small of ear and brain
With Nature's boundless concords measure keep?
Not so! *Her* lyre hath thousand tones too deep
Too high for man to hear or to sustain!
Nor doubt that likewise in this soul of ours
Functions and Faculties there work alway
Below the level of our conscious powers,
And chords whose music—were there aught to wake
Its echoes 'mid that inner world—would shake
To dust our tenement of mortal clay.

FATHER DAMIEN

I

Lives there not, still replaced as time goes by,
Some man who wears the wide earth's crown of woe,
Pain's Victim-Priest, a shadow cast below
By Him that Victim-Priest enthroned on high?[1]
Mounts not that man elect his Calvary
Like Christ by choice not doom? If this be so
The world's blind prophets ill the graces know
Men reap from that perennial agony!
Damien! no name like thine exalts old story!
Dread Leper-Saint, pray well for me and mine
Both here and harboured in the eternal glory;
For this is sure—that living woes like thine
Are knit so closely with Christ's Death Divine
They draw from it some power expiatory.

II

Thy greatness is *our* vaunt; vainglorious thought
To thee finds access never: that is well!
The Spirits that whisper round thy midnight cell
Waft thee a dew of purer solace fraught

[1] "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for His Body which is the Church." (Coloss. i. 24.)

With Eden's sweetness only—solace caught
From bowers where Love and Meekness blended dwell,
And whence not boasts but songs thanksgiving swell
Love-songs of martyr souls. This fight well fought
Thy death will crown; thy greatness then be known:
Who then shall lead thee to thy paradise?
Those saints who best true joy, true beauty see
When hid by mists of earth—Cecilia, she
Whose bridal wreath angels discerned alone,
And Agnes angel-veiled from fleshly eyes.

ALFRED TENNYSON

I

THE LAND'S VIGIL

How many a face throughout the Imperial Isle
From Kentish shores to Scottish hill or hall
From Cambrian vales to Windsor's royal pile
Turned sadly towards one House more sad than all
Turned day by day, fear-blanched! When evening's pall
Shrouded a day that scarce had heart to smile
How oft sad eyes, spelled by one thought the while
Not seeing seemed to see a taper small
Night after, flashed from one casement high!

Let these men sing his praise! Others there are
Who fitlier might have sung them in old time
Since they loved best who loved him in his prime—
Their youth, and his, expired long since and far:
Now he is gone it seems "again to die."

II

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

'Tis well! Not always nations are ingrate!
He gave his country "of his best;" and she
Gave to her bard in glorious rivalry
Her whole great heart. A People and a State
Had met, through love a tomb to consecrate:
In the Abbey old each order and degree
Low knelt, and upward gazing seemed to see
Not that dark vault but Heaven's expanding gate.
O'er him the death-song he had made they sung:—
Thus when in Rome the Prince of Painters died
His Art's last marvel o'er his bier was hung[1]
At once in heavenly hope and honest pride:
Thus England honoured him she loved that day;
Thus many prayed—as England's Saints will pray.

[1] Raffael's "Transfiguration."

III

THE POET

None sang of Love more nobly; few as well;
Of Friendship none with pathos so profound;
Of Duty sternliest-proved when myrtle-crowned;
Of English grove and rivulet mead and dell;
Great Arthur's Legend he alone dared tell;
Milton and Dryden feared to tread that ground;
For him alone o'er Camelot's faery bound
The "horns of Elf-land" blew their magic spell.
Since Shakespeare and since Wordsworth none hath sung
So well his England's greatness; none hath given
Reproof more fearless or advice more sage:
None inlier taught how near to earth is Heaven;
With what vast concords Nature's harp is strung;
How base false pride; faction's fanatic rage.

IV

THE REWARD

The land whose loveliness in verse of thine
Shews lovelier yet than prank'd on Nature's page
Shall prove *thy* poet in some future age
Sing thee, *her* Poet, not in measured line
Or metric stave, but music more benign;

Shall point to British Galahads who wage
Battle on Wrong; to British maids who gage
Like Agnes, heart and hope to Love divine.
Worn men like thy Ulysses scorning fear
Shall tempt strange seas beneath an alien star:
Old men from cherished haunts and households dear
Summoned by death to realms unknown and far
Thy "Silent Voices" from on high shall hear
With happier auspice cross thy "harbour bar."

ILFRACOMBE

Lives there some artist true whose genial grace
Softly subserves an insight tenderer still,
Potent to charm with brush or poet's quill
Its *human* beauty forth from Nature's face
And stamp it upon human hearts—to chase
Lights sweet as love-smiles o'er the wind-swept hill,
Or from the virgin bosom of a rill
To lure that peace which holds a deeper place
In holy hearts than in benignest climes?
Lives he? Then let him fare to Ilfracombe!
There ocean's fragrance mingles with the lime's;
There sea-cliffs cast their best of gleam and gloom;
There sinks the combe gorse-gilt; there swells in glory
Sheer from green waves the sun-crowned promontory.

TINTAGEL

When first remote Tintagel met mine eyes
Between its bastions and the setting sun
Cloud-pageantries of conflicts lost and won
Rushed madly, so it seemed, through reddening skies:
The glooming wave was streaked with sanguine dyes;
Strange, fiery crowns crested the sea-cliffs dun,
The caves beneath them, black as Acheron
Blended their widow-wails with onset cries
From Bostcastle and Bude. There moved in power
Arthur, the King! No knightly mail he wore,
No charger strode. Thundered his battle-axe
Upon the flying Northmen's iron backs.
Sunlike that long-haired Briton shone that hour;
Fast fled the heathen o'er that ship-thronged shore!

THE NAPOLEONIC AND THE DEMOCRATIC DESPOTISM

England! What boots it if through grace of thine
Thy valour, foresight, fortitude, that man
Of tyrants worst since tyranny began
Was hurled o'er Europe's verge by doom divine
Thenceforth a giant chained to gaze supine,
From that far rock on heaven? A century's span

Well nigh, thy fortune's river broadening ran,
Thy world-wide Empire dreamed of no decline.
What boots it now? A later challenge came
More inly sacred. Tyranny no more—
'Twas Anarchy that knocked at Europe's door,
That knocks at thine. All lands thy succour claim:
Point them the path; spurn thou the Jacobin game;
'Gainst that—a baser foe—be now thy war!

PUBLIC OPINION

Opinion rules the world, Opinion sane;
As oft, alas, Opinion bribed or blind;
Around the spacious globe, the lands, the main,
Opinion circles like the fleeting wind,
That wind which wafts to April corn the rain,
Which cools those hands September's sheaf that bind,
Yet prostrates oft grey tower and sacred fane
Or strikes with pestilence prince alike and hind.
England! Be thine to launch from Thought's still height
Abroad o'er suffering earth's infected plains
Where faction rules while arrogant weakness reigns
A breeze of pure Opinion winged with Right:
Cry thou, "Where Justice sits are Life and Might;
Where Rapine and Revolt, there death or chains."

EDMUND BURKE AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The age was sordid; Christian hope burned low;
Old thrones of Wisdom tottered insecure;
Old crowns of Kings, like mist that o'er a moor
When tempest nears it, wavers to and fro,
Shook on weak heads portending overthrow
By some deserved. The Gallic Siren's lure
Sang to their death-doom prince at once and boor
Blind pupils of Helvetius and Rousseau.
Daily to England's shores the infection spread
Of Unbelief and Faith Republican
In pagan league. Then forth there stepped one man:
He stood betwixt the living and the dead:
He raised his hand. The Spirits of darkness fled:—
To them that Prophet's rod was flail and fan.

TO THE LIBERAL UNIONISTS OF 1887

Ye, who, to Virtue and your Country vowed,
Reject, denounce dishonoured party ties
And side by side with ancient enemies
Confront the Jacobin onset blind and loud
Nor snared by sophist tongue nor clamour-cowed,
England's brave sons, pursue your high emprise

So much the more the more the unjust the unwise
Rain on you fire from faction's low-hung cloud.
Against you march Revolt and Rapine's brood:—
That sect its scope remoter knows not yet:
In France its axe is red with brother's blood:
Firm as a flint your face 'gainst such is set:
Old friends change faith: to old convictions true
Ye change but place. Changelings are they not you.

ENGLAND IN 1885

Heart of my country, beat thy pulses yet?
For, daily, deeds thou own'st not in thy name
Are done that once had made thee die for shame:
Still round thy shores the billows fawn or fret;
Still through thy meads on winds thy rivulet;
Still rise thy hills; thy race remains the same;
But where are now that valour, wisdom, fame,
Thy dowery erst? Flushed cheek and eyes tear-wet
Alone reply. Strong Brain of England old
What spell hath thawed thee to a blinding dew
That knows not vile from righteous, false from true?
Gordon's great heart in Egypt's sands lies cold:
The Boer's Dutch standard flies where England's flew:
Thy sons on Ireland's shores have heard their death-bell
tolled.

THE DECAY OF NATIONALITY

True love is Tragic Love, that love, alas
That yoke of love thy sagest, England, bear
Contrasting things that are with things that were
Impotent gold that bides with powers that pass.
Thy name is Legion. "Interest," "Clique," and "Class"
War each on each and Sects thy vitals tear.
Where is thy moral Unity? O where
That Patriot Heart which organised the mass
Of all thy earlier strivings into one?
Shorn of that strength the Nation perisheth:—
Beware of Selfishness: its chill is Death:
Beware of Faction! Soon its course is run.
Ask, as I ask 'mid many a fierce debate,
"Love they their mother who their brethren hate?"

THE AGNOSTIC'S QUESTION

What art thou, Life? For some there are that ask
"Is Life worth living?" Are we come to this,
Heroic centuries past of bale or bliss,
The Poet's song, the Patriot's solemn task?
The Pagan's heart itself was free to bask
At least in Nature's joy—the laugh—the kiss—

Life ran, a bright wine from an honest cask;
Hope sped her arrow gaily, hit or miss.
Sublimer ages followed: Truth was known:
Faith ruled. But Love grew weak by slow decay:
O'er blackening ocean rushed a tempest blind:—
What wonder if a ship with mast o'er-blown
Dragged at its side, more slowly drifts this day
Than skiffs that ne'er spread canvas to the wind?

"IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?"

Life is a thing worth living to the brave
Who fear not Fortune's spite, in Truth who trust
Whose spirit, not thralled by pride or earthward lust,
Stands up while mortal tumults round them rave
Like Teneriffe above the ocean wave;
Who, mailed in Duty, with divine disgust
Recoil from frivolous joys and aims unjust,
Nor miss rewards which Reason scorns to crave.
Life is worth living to those souls of light
Who live for others and by gift bestow
On them the jubilant beams their own by right;
Who, knowing Life's defects, more inly know
This Life is not the Temple but the Gate
Where men secure of entrance watch and wait.

An altar I would rear beside the Rhine,
And by the Arno, and the Adrian sea,
For there, O Friends beloved, one home had we
And thence, O Friends beloved and ever mine
We ranged together. Alp and Apennine
Henceforth are rich in household nooks to me,
Nor wholly solitary can I be
Whether the Palm my tent I make, or Pine.
How large a portion of earth's populous ball
Have you to me endeared! Therefore less keen
Sorrow one day shall prove, or Fortune's spleen,
Or all the ills that lonely age befall.
Ah yes;—and yet, had I been worthier, all
Which was so dear still dearer might have been.

NOTES

FATHER DAMIEN, p. 255

IN the year 1873 Father Damien, a young Belgian priest, devoted himself to missionary labours in the Leper Settlement of Molokai, one of the Sandwich Islands. After the lapse of ten years he caught the malady, and died.

[*Extracts from recent letters of Father Damien to friends interested in his mission among the lepers*]

"Pray recommend to all your spiritual children to pray for the conversion of great numbers of our unfortunate outcasts, for a great many of them are more afflicted with spiritual leprosy than physical. . . . The disease is now pretty well all over my body, but so far only externally. . . . Ainsi le sacrifice de ma santé que le bon Dieu a bien voulu accepter, en fructifiant un peu mon ministère parmi les lépreux, se trouve être, après tout, bien léger, et même agréable pour moi, osant dire un peu comme S. Paul, 'Mortuus sum et vita mea abscondita est cum Christo in Deo.'"

Such expressions, casually finding a place in a letter, preach the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Resurrection more powerfully than the most eloquent treatise.

COLUMBUS AT SEVILLE, p. 179

A number of charges have recently been made against Columbus which are strikingly at variance with a crowd of high authorities, charges that represent him as little better than a selfish adventurer, if not a brutal buccaneer. Such an estimate would cheat the world of the reverence which it has been hitherto privileged to feel

for one of its greatest men. Those who wrote at more leisure on the subject will not, however, be very easily put out of court. Washington Irving speaks thus: "The system of Columbus (he refers to the *Ripartimentos*) may have borne hard upon the Indians, born and brought up in untasked freedom, but it was never cruel or sanguinary. He (Columbus) inflicted no wanton massacres, nor vindictive punishments; his desire was to cherish and civilise the Indians, and to render them useful subjects, not to oppress and persecute and destroy them. When he beheld the desolation that had swept them from Maryland during his suspension from authority, he could not suppress the strong expression of his feelings. In a letter written to the king after his return to Spain he thus expresses himself on the subject: 'The Indians of Hispaniola were and are the riches of the island: for it is they who cultivate, and make the bread and the provisions for the Christians, who dig the gold from the mines, and perform all the offices and labours both of men and beasts. I am informed that since I left this island six parts out of seven of the natives are dead, all through ill treatment and inhumanity.' They had," Irving tells us, "loved him well, and wept at his departure." Irving also insists on it that zealous as Columbus was for the advancement of scientific knowledge, "still he regarded it (the discovery of America) but as a minor event preparatory to the great enterprise," the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. "The spirit of the Crusades had not passed away." Sir Arthur Helps writes: "Columbus had all the spirit of a Crusader, and, at the same time, the investigating nature of a modern man of science." It is thus that Prescott speaks of Columbus: "The finger of the historian will find it difficult to point to a single blemish in his moral character. His correspondence breathes the sentiment of devoted loyalty to his sovereigns. His conduct habitually displayed the utmost solicitude for the interests of his followers. . . . His dealings were regulated by the nicest principles of honour and justice. . . . The grand object to which he devoted himself seemed to expand his whole soul. . . . It (Columbus' character) was in perfect harmony with the grandeur of his plans, and their results more stupendous than those which heaven has permitted any other mortal to achieve."—*Ferdinand and Isabella*, Part II. chap. ix.

A vindictive and unworthy habit of brooding over his own wrongs has been by some attributed to Columbus, on the ground that he ordered that the chains placed upon him when he was sent home to Spain a disgraced man should be buried with him.

But a letter written by him in his later life, and published long since, distinctly states that his aim in issuing that command, or at least in sustaining it, was that the memory of his wrongs should be interred with him. He feared lest those chains might excite in their beholders feelings of a vindictive character and one injurious to the king and queen. Had the act of Columbus not been one of a distinctly generous character there need still have been nothing vindictive about it.

Another charge brought against Columbus is that he urged the Spanish Government to send the Spanish criminals to the Indies. Had this counsel meant that those criminals were ever to mix with the general population of the Indies it would have been a grievous error, though one which in very recent times has disgraced colonisation. As Washington Irving states it, the counsel more probably was only that Spanish criminals should expiate their crimes, so long as their sentences lasted, upon public works in the Indies not in Spain, thus protecting the Indian population from the heaviest toils and supplying labour for arduous works absolutely necessary in the new Spanish settlements.

Another charge brought against Columbus relates to his second marriage. It has been said that Beatrix Enriquez, the mother of his second son, Fernando, was not his wife but his mistress. That matter has been most carefully discussed by Count Roselly de Lorques, who, in an elaborate historic criticism, shews that the scandal rests on no solid foundation; that till after the lapse of many years it had never been heard of; that it is directly opposed to much of ancient testimony, and to the words of Columbus himself; and that it cannot be reconciled with many acknowledged facts.

Columbus has been accused of cruelty in connection with the death of Adrian de Moxica; but one of his recent biographers, Arthur George Knight, maintains that the guilty person was not Columbus, but his chief enemy, Roldan. The former had very justly sentenced to death a man convicted of a plot to assassinate himself (Columbus) and others; but he was not present when the cruel act took place, viz. the execution of the criminal without the sacraments of the Church; and when he heard of that act he was filled with grief.

It can hardly be supposed that Columbus, who, though a wonderful Christian hero, was a man and not an angel, never fell into any error or inconsistency in the course of his long and stormy career. We do not know how truly great and good a

man is unless we know both how seldom he errs seriously, and how seriously he laments such errors. Perhaps this consideration weighed with me when representing Columbus as, on a single occasion and under most trying circumstances, adopting a course which seemed at the time to him right and necessary, but which at a later time he condemned. Whether his earlier judgment or his later was sound we cannot now know. It need not be observed that no severity of self-condemnation could in him be a measure of its justice, since great natures often lament imaginary defects, and exaggerate every deviation from their high abiding aim, while meaner natures deny or extenuate their errors. If Columbus erred on that occasion his greatness can well afford the admission of that error by his most ardent admirers. But the act in question was one which we cannot now judge; for Columbus was surrounded by traitors bent on his destruction, who falsified his deeds in order to cover their own crimes, and who may well have tampered with his correspondence no less. In the life of a great man belonging to times long past there generally occur some obscure passages. The sole clue to such passages is that one afforded by the known character of the man and the general tenor of his acts; for then the part is interpreted by the whole, as honesty requires.

THE END

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